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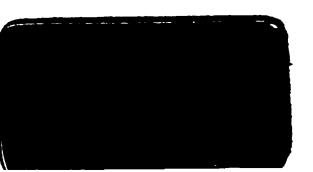

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VOL. V.

CASTLE OF CLISSON

EDINBURGH:

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MEMOIRS

OF THE

MARCHIONESS

DE LA ROCHEJAQUELEIN.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

EDINBURGH:

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MEMOIRS

OF

THE MARCHIONESS

OF

ROCHEJAQUELEIN.

PREFACE.

THE civil war of La Vendée forms one of the most interesting events of the Revolution in France. It was little known in this country while it was raging, and there is much room for censuring the ministers of Britain, who did not avail themselves of the opportunities which it afforded, of obtaining the most important advantages for the allied cause. We knew, indeed, generally in England, that the Royalists had a force in part of Poitou, and that they had several rencounters with the Republicans, which had terminated to their advantage. But few English, if any, were fully aware, that while every other province in France submitted more or less patiently to the dominion of Robespierre and his associates, La Vendée, a province hardly known to us by name, had on foot large armies which fought pitched battles,—gained decisive victories,—took fortified towns, and more than once might, with a moderate degree of assistance from troops

and money, have perhaps ended the Revolution by a march to Paris. It was reasonable to infer that a country capable of such exertions in a cause almost deserted by all France besides, had something peculiar in its circumstances; and when we consider the nature of these peculiarities, they will be found to form a great lesson both to princes and people.

No one will venture to deny, that in the last years of Louis XVI. some great change in the old despotic constitution of France was become absolutely necessary. The burdens of the state, which should have been equally discharged by all its subjects, in proportion to their means, were thrown entirely on the class of the commons, while the clergy and gentry paid nothing to the support of the general expenditure. The finances were in a state of virtual bankruptcy; the subjects generally irritated at their rulers, and desirous of reclaiming those rights of freemen from which they were debarred by the old feudal laws. This was not a state of things to be endured in the eighteenth century; and, accordingly, a change was loudly and generally called for. Designing and ambitious men took advantage of the national fervour of the French people, to drive this spirit of laudable reformation into all the excesses of the most furious revolution which the world ever saw. Instead of restoring to

the people their just liberties, and securing the king, the church, and the aristocracy, in possession of such rights as might be consistent with a settled and well-balanced government, they rooted up and pulled down everything which was established, overthrew the throne, banished the nobility, disowned not their church only, but their religion and Deity, and, by the direction of the vile miscreants who had created this anarchy, committed the most horrible cruelties under the pretext of preserving liberty.

These demagogues could not have possessed the power over the passions of the populace necessary to the execution of their criminal schemes, if, previous to the Revolution, the French aristocracy had been in the habit of discharging those duties towards the lower classes of the community, which are necessary for cementing the union betwixt the various ranks of society. The nobleman or gentleman of property ought, in ordinary cases, to reside, for a certain season at least, on his estates. He is the natural superior, and the best patron, of his farmers and his poorer neighbours. The expenditure of his income among them is one source of their prosperity,—his bounty ought to relieve them in cases of distress—he is umpire of their disputes—they are companions and assistants in his field-sports. Amidst the interchange of mutual good of-

fices, the chains by which the feudal system binds the plebeians to the nobles, are naturally superseded by the gentle and honourable ties of mutual affection for mutual kindness.

Unhappily, this order of things had been totally changed in France. A fatal policy, first practised by Cardinal Richelieu, had seduced the wealthier and more dignified part of the French nobles, *La Haute Noblesse*, as they were termed, to place their importance in a constant residence at court, and in their successful intrigues for the royal favour. The management of their estates was left to stewards; and the tenants neither felt the favours, nor feared the displeasure, of a landlord, who left all to his deputy, and whose existence they knew only by his draining them of money. When the two principal classes of society lived in this state of disunion, it was easy to sow dissension between them, and to exasperate the lower orders against the nobility and gentry, from whom they neither received favours nor experienced influence. There were honourable individual exceptions to this general error, but it prevailed over the kingdom at large, and was the principal cause of the French Revolution extending beyond the limits of wholesome and moderate reformation. Far from being able to raise in the provinces and on their estates such a force

as might have enabled them to stem the torrent of Jacobinical fury, the nobles found often their worst foes among their own peasants, and were driven from their estates by the insurrections of their very tenants, who, in other circumstances, would have been their surest protectors. This tended much to the increase of emigration; a fatal measure in itself, as seeming to unite with the armies of strangers those proprietors, who had, by birth, the deepest interest in the country about to be invaded.

La Vendée and the neighbouring districts stood in a peculiar degree exempted from that discord between the peasants and the nobility, which caused such melancholy consequences through the rest of France. This arose, in a great measure, out of local circumstances.

The extensive country of which La Vendée is the centre, comprehends a much larger space than properly bears that name, as it includes a considerable portion of the departments of Maine and Loire, of Loire Inferieure, and of Les Deux Sevres, as well as La Vendée Proper. The soil is not fit for the plough, but admirably adapted to the raising of cattle, and lies divided into pastures of small extent, but very rich in produce, which are scattered among groves and forests so extensive, that the whole district is known by the name of the *Bocage*, or Thicket. The peasants inhabited each his

little separate farm, all were easy and independent, and none possessed overgrown wealth. They were little oppressed by the public burdens, having a dispensation from the heaviest, on condition of their maintaining the various cuts and canals by which their country is drained. These canals, joined to the extreme badness of the roads, the intervention of numerous hedgerows and thickets, and the frequent rains, render La Vendée very inaccessible unless to the natives, who, familiar with these difficulties, are accustomed to bound over the obstacles, by means of a pole or quarter-staff guarded with iron, which they are wont to carry, and which, in the course of the war, they sometimes used as a formidable weapon. They were a religious, moral, and contented race, desiring nothing more than to possess the enjoyment of the faith, laws, and possessions, which had belonged to their fathers.

The noblesse, or, as we should say, the gentry of La Vendée, had, like their dependants, a character belonging to the ancient, rather than to the modern world. They lived much on their properties, and in a state of primitive simplicity. Even such as went occasionally to Paris, had the good sense to lay aside the manners of the metropolis, and resume their provincial simplicity, so soon as they returned to the Bocage. When the ladies went abroad, it was on horseback, or

in carriages drawn by bullocks. When the Seigneur went to the chase, which was frequent in that woodland district, the peasants attended, and attained considerable dexterity in the art of shooting, besides enjoying the sport with an appetite equal to that of their master himself. The payment of rent and their management of farms, were upon a footing highly favourable for the continuation of mutual regard between the proprietor and tenant, as the interests of both were common. The tenant managed the stock of cattle, and accounted for a proportion of the profit to the landlord; and thus they shared together the prosperity or adversity of the season. The farms seldom exceeded five-and-twenty or thirty pounds in rent, and he was a great proprietor who had twenty or thirty such farms; so that, among great and small, there was but little wealth, and no poverty. A holiday was a scene of mutual hospitality to gentleman and peasant. The family of the latter danced in the court-yard of the chateau, and the Seigneur and his family usually joined in the amusement. Thus, in sport and in business, in pecuniary interests and in the rites of religion, the gentry and peasants were united together; and the better-instructed understandings, as well as the natural superiority, of the proprietors, preserved that influence over the minds of the lower classes, which else-

where through France had been generally lost.

It was not, however, the influence of the nobles which at first raised the insurrection, of which the following pages contain an interesting history. Two other circumstances more immediately occasioned the rising of La Vendée.

The National Convention had imposed upon the Catholic clergy an oath, which, as it declared them independent of the supremacy of Rome, was in direct contradiction to the religious vows which they had taken upon entering the church. The great body of the clergy resigned, or were forcibly deprived of their cures, in consequence of their refusing this oath; and the Vendéens saw, with great indignation, the curates, upon whose religious instruction they relied, and who had discharged their office with much paternal zeal, displaced and exiled, and their room supplied by persons less scrupulous in conscience, and consequently less correct in morals. This gave great and general dissatisfaction amongst the peasants of the Bocage.

Another cause which more immediately instigated the inhabitants of La Vendée to assume arms, was the attempts to enforce the conscription, and to send the youth of their country to recruit the armies engaged in foreign conquests. For this purpose, a compulsory levy of two hundred thousand

men was enforced over all France. As the Vendéens took no interest in the revolutionary motives by which other provinces were actuated, and regarded with aversion and horror the steps taken against the established church and the person of the king, they were inaccessible to the motives which induced France at large to submit to this severe measure; and the attempts to resist it in different quarters, were the first cause of their taking up arms. When assembled in great force of numbers, they chose officers chiefly, though not exclusively, amongst the nobility, gave battle to the regular forces of the republic, were not only repeatedly victorious, but showed great alertness in rallying after defeat, and did infinitely more damage to the Republicans than was achieved by the best troops of the allied armies. In their case, as in many other instances, the intelligence of those whom they chose to be leaders, together with the desperate courage of the Vendéens themselves, formed a peculiar species of tactics, adapted, at the same time, to the character of the troops, and local circumstances of the country. This proved on many occasions superior to the discipline of regular forces, which, against determined and active men, does not always give the expected advantages. Their principal mode of attack was by a species of bush-fighting. By a manœuvre, which they termed in their

dialect *S'egailler*, they spread themselves like a party of sharp-shooters, on every side of the close columns of the enemy, who, advancing through a country in itself extremely difficult, found themselves assailed by a destructive and well-aimed fire from every quarter, while they saw no tangible point on which they might direct an attack with any chance of decisive success. The cries of the insurgents, the continued fire on every point, and their dispersion over so large a space, appeared to double their numbers; and if at any point the Republicans disbanded, or showed symptoms of confusion, the Vendéens, led by their most spirited chiefs, did not hesitate to rush on and complete, by a close attack, the terror which they had inspired by their more distant style of fighting.

It is needless to observe, that the dispersing and rallying necessary for such a mode of warfare required the highest degree of individual zeal and intelligence in the troops who practised it, since every small body of marksmen, nay, in some degree, every individual, acted on his own responsibility in the choice of his position, and the selection of the favourable moment of advance or retreat.

While the Vendéens were in arms, and triumphant, there was also a large army of Bretons on foot for the monarchy, command-

ed by the celebrated La Charrette, and which gained many successes. It was unhappy for their cause, that the chiefs of these independent armies do not appear to have acted with cordiality, or upon united views; otherwise more important advantages might have been derived from their frequent victories. It was also unfortunate for them that the British ministers seem, as already mentioned, not to have been aware of the benefits which might have accrued from supplying them with arms and ammunition, as well as with a body of auxiliary forces. When the royalists were in possession of the isle of Noirmoutier, this could have been accomplished without difficulty. The only serious attempt made to encourage these brave men was by the ill-concerted expedition of Quiberon, undertaken after the royalist cause in Bretagne was entirely lost.

The insurrection of La Vendée began in March 1793, and, considering it as a great and general war, terminated upon the defeat at Quiberon, on 20th July 1795.

The mind is naturally led to draw comparisons between the civil wars of England during the middle of the seventeenth century, and the revolution of France in the end of the eighteenth; and, in doing so, is struck with the similarity betwixt the insurrection of La Vendée and the war con-

ducted by Montrose and the Scottish Highlanders in the preceding century.

The parallel, doubtless, is not exact in all its points. The Highlanders were brought to the field by their natural love of war, by their habitual use of arms, and by their patriarchal attachment to their chiefs. The Vendéens, a peaceful race, were driven to arms by aggressions on their religion and personal liberties. The Highlanders, commanded by the supereminent genius of one, of whom Du Retz said, that he best filled up his ideal sketch of the heroes of Plutarch, extended their victories more widely, and improved them more successfully, than the Vendéens, but sunk under a single defeat. The inhabitants of La Vendée, commanded by different chiefs, did not evince the same energy in improving success; but, relying less on the fortune of one man, they rallied, and were again victorious, after repeatedly sustaining the greatest reverses. The mode of fighting of the Highlanders and the Vendéens was different; the marksmen of the Bocage relying upon bush-fighting, while the mountaineers, after giving one volley, charged in small but compact columns upon different points of an extended line, and trusted to their superior use of the broadsword in close combat. Religion, which made a great feature in the Vendéen war, was not among the motives which instigated the army of Mon-

trose. These are the points of difference, but those of resemblance are more general and more strongly marked.

On both those memorable occasions, a sequestered and primitive race arose against the regular force of the rest of the nation, in defence of the ancient institutions which had been handed down by their fathers. In both cases, high courage, natural sagacity, hardiness of constitution, and activity of person, rendered the insurgents superior to their disciplined adversaries, in fierceness of onset, judiciousness of combination, celerity of marches, and the power of enduring the fatigues of war. In both cases, they obtained splendid victories against every odds of numbers, aggravated by want of suitable arms, and especially of ammunition.

These foresters of the Bocage equally resembled the Scottish mountaineers, in the disadvantages which attended their peculiar mode of warfare. Being all volunteers, and serving without pay, they conceived themselves at liberty to leave the army when they pleased, and a victory was, more frequently than a defeat, the signal for a diminution of their force. The Vendéens, like the Highlanders, were unskilled in the attack of fortified places; and several of their greatest reverses were sustained in consequence of rash enterprises of this nature. In an open country, favourable for the action of caval-

ry, these primitive warriors engaged with less advantage than in strong and inclosed grounds. The number of independent chiefs and commanders was apt to introduce discords into their councils, which sometimes disorganized even the plans of Montrose, and almost always paralyzed the exertions of the Vendéens. To conclude; a war which did so much honour to the leaders who conducted it, terminated in both cases in their ruin and extinction. Many died by military execution, or the form of judicial process; their families were exiled or disinherited; and they left behind no other fruits of their success, save the glory they had won.

The accomplished and amiable authoress of the following Memoirs was born and bred up in the precincts of a court, yet writes with the virtuous simplicity and quiet dignity of a matron of Rome. Her style is entirely free from a species of literary coquetry, that is sometimes to be found in the very best species of French composition, which is generally more marked by ingenuity than by simplicity. Her person was always delicate, and so feminine as to seem incapable of sustaining the personal difficulties and privations in which she was involved, and which the manner she was bred up in must have rendered less endurable. She was herself sensible of this, and said to an English lady, who had been anxious to be introduced to

so celebrated a person, "You must allow, you expected to see something more like a heroine." Her character in private life was, as might have been expected from the pure and virtuous style of her writings, totally unblemished.

It is remarkable, that two other female historians, Mesdames Bonchamps and Sapinaud, were, like Madame de la Rochejaquelein, widows of distinguished leaders during the disastrous war of La Vendée.

ABBOTSFORD, *February* 1, 1826.

TO MY CHILDREN.

It is for you, my dear Children, that I have had the resolution to finish these Memoirs, begun long before your birth, and many times abandoned. I feel a mournful pleasure in recounting to you the glorious history of the life and death of your parents and friends. Other books may acquaint you with the principal actions by which they were distinguished; but I have thought that a simple recital, written by your mother, would inspire you with a more filial and tender sentiment for their illustrious memory. I regarded it also as a duty, to render homage to their brave companions in arms. But how many traits have escaped me! I had no notes. What remained on my memory of the deep impression received at the time, has been my only resource. Far from being able to write the complete history of La Vendée, I have not even related all that passed during the times I witnessed. I have to regret the omission of many interesting facts, and many names worthy of being recorded; but I felt both unable and unwilling to relate anything beyond my immediate recollections, and did

not pretend to write a history of the Civil War. I fervently hope that other pens, better qualified than mine, will undertake the melancholy task.

I availed myself of an opportunity I had, of submitting these Memoirs to persons in our army, in whose accuracy I could confide, and by their means corrected some errors. M. Prosper de Barante undertook the revisal and correction of the whole, but without any attempt to improve the extreme plainness of the style, which, perhaps, accords best with the simple truth. The description of the country in the Third Chapter is entirely his.

DONNISSAN DE LA ROCHEJAQUELEIN.

August 1, 1811.

MEMOIRS, &c.

CHAPTER I.

MY BIRTH—COALITION OF POITOU—MY MARRIAGE —ORDER TO REMAIN AT PARIS—PERIOD WHICH PRECEDED THE 10TH OF AUGUST 1792.

I WAS born at Versailles the 25th of October 1772, only daughter of the Marquis de Donnissan, gentilhomme d'honneur of Monsieur (now Louis XVIII.) My mother, daughter of the Duc de Civrac, was (dame d'atours) lady-in-waiting of Madame Victoire. The goodness, I had almost said friendship, of this Princess, rendered her the protector of all our family, and I had the honour of being her goddaughter, and that of the King.

I was educated in the Palace of Versailles, till the 6th of October 1789, at which epoch I set out in the carriage of the Princesses, who followed in the train of the unfortunate Louis XVI., then dragged to Paris. They obtained permission to stop at Bellevue, under the guard of the Parisian troops.

The first misfortunes of the Revolution affected my mother extremely. She anticipated the most horrible consequences, and begged Madame Victoire to permit her to pass some time on her estate in Medoc. My father obtained the permission of Monsieur, and we set out the end of October. I had been destined in infancy to be the wife of M. le Marquis de Lescure, born in October 1766. He was son of a sister of my mother's, who died in childbed. His father, dying in the year 1784, left him 800,000 francs of debt, which broke off our marriage. The greatest part of the fortune was then in the hands of the Countess de Lescure, his grandmother. Although advised by lawyers to renounce the succession of his father, he had the delicacy, as well as the Countess de Lescure, to become answerable for the whole; and they practised such strict economy, that, at the age of twenty-four, M. de Lescure had only 200,000 francs of debt, and the certainty of an income of 80,000 francs. My parents now consented to a union which had been equally desired by us all. M. de Lescure had entered the military school at thirteen years of age, and left it at seventeen. Among the young people of his own age, none were better informed, more virtuous in every respect, more perfect in short; he was at the same time so modest, that he seemed ashamed of his own merit, and his endeavour was to conceal it. He was timid and awkward, and although of a good height and figure, his manners and unfashionable dress might not be prepossessing at first. He was born with strong passions, yet, notwithstanding the general example, and particularly that of his father, whose habits were irregular, he conducted himself with the most

perfect correctness. His great piety preserved him from the contagion, and insulated him in the midst of the court and of the world. He took the sacrament every fortnight. The constant habit of resisting his inclinations and all external seductions, had rendered him rather unsocial and reserved; his opinions were strongly fixed in his mind, and sometimes he showed himself pertinaciously attached to them. At the same time, he had the most perfect gentleness, and being entirely free from anger or even impatience, his temper was always equal, and his calmness unalterable. He passed his time in study and meditation, from taste and not from vanity, for he only wished to enjoy what he knew; of which I shall mention an example. One day at the Duchess de Civrac's, our grandmother, he had, according to his custom, taken a book, instead of joining in the conversation. My grandmother reproached him with it, adding, "that since the book was so interesting, he ought to read it aloud." He obeyed;—at the end of half an hour some one looking over him, exclaimed, "*Ah, it is English! Why did not you say so?*" He answered, with a disconcerted look,—"My good grandmother not understanding English, it was necessary that I should read in French." His father, although a good-natured man, was unhappily addicted to dissipation and play. He had for a companion in his irregularities the governor of his son; but that son was so remarkably rational and gentle, that they often confessed their faults to him, seeking advice and consolation. Notwithstanding this unnatural situation, he always preserved towards his father a respectful attachment.

M. de Lescure came to the house of my parents

in the month of June, 1791. He then belonged to a very important confederacy, that had been formed in Poitou; and could command 30,000 men. Almost all the gentlemen of the country had engaged in it, and they thought they might depend upon a great part of the inhabitants of the province. The event proved them in the right. They had gained two regiments, with one of which they formed the garrison of Rochelle, and the other was at Poitiers. On a given day they were to pretend orders from the government; the regiments were to unite; and, in concert with all the gentlemen, they were to operate a junction with another confederacy forming towards Lyons, and wait for the Princes, then in Savoy. The flight of the King, and his subsequent arrest, disconcerted all these projects. M. de Lescure, learning the departure of his Majesty, left us to go where his duty called him, but returned a few days after, because the noblesse of Poitou, perceiving that the purpose of their confederacy had failed, resolved to emigrate as others had done: Although far from being persecuted on their estates, many of them commanded the local national guard, and every day the peasants came to ask permission to arm themselves against the republicans. The Princes knew the state of things, and did not imagine that the Poitevins would emigrate; but the young people were determined to follow the torrent. It was in vain represented to them, that they ought to remain where they might be useful, and that, having the happiness to belong to a faithful province, they ought not to leave it. Listening to nothing, they would not even wait the return of two persons who had been sent to receive the definitive orders

of the Princes. Thus the whole confederacy of Poitou was dissolved. They emigrated in crowds, and those who were of a different opinion, found themselves obliged to imitate the rest. M. de Lescure set out from Gascogne, with the Count de Lorges, our cousin-german. They encountered risks in going out of France, were obliged to take guides among the smugglers on the frontiers, and to travel on foot by circuitous roads.

M. de Lescure, the day of his arrival at Tournay, learned that his grandmother had had an attack of apoplexy, and was near expiring. He asked permission from the chiefs of the emigrants to return to Poitou, which being granted, he returned to Madame de Lescure; and, seeing there was still some hope of her life being prolonged, he thought of rejoining the emigrants; but wished to see me first, and to pass a day with us. My mother had consulted, respecting M. de Lescure's intended emigration, M. le Count de Mercy Argentau, former ambassador from Austria in France, her friend. He was in the confidence of Prince Kaunitz, and knew better than any other person the disposition of the cabinet of Vienna. He said they were not ready for war;—that the different governments would not begin, unless they should be forced to the measure;—and that M. de Lescure might very well pass the winter in France. But he had already set out when this answer arrived.

Madame de Chastellux, my aunt, who had followed the Princesses to Rome, had sent from the Pope the dispensation necessary for my marriage. It intimated that it could not be celebrated but by a priest who had refused the new oath, or who

had retracted it. This was, I believe, the first time the Pope had declared his opinion upon the subject. Many priests in the neighbourhood, on hearing it, retracted the oath they had taken. There was found also, by great chance, a priest in our parish who had not been sworn, L'Abbé Queyriaux. The new constitutional bishop had at first appointed another curate; but he was a German, who, not being able to make himself understood by the peasants of Médoc, withdrew. The parish, finding themselves without a curate, demanded another of the bishop. As he was but an unbeliever, and attached no importance to the diversities of religious opinions, he told the inhabitants to engage their old curate to return provisionally to his parish. He was there often insulted by worthless people; but he supported his situation with piety and courage.

All these circumstances, and, still more, the mutual sentiments of M. de Lescure and myself, determined my mother to conclude my marriage.

M. de Lescure learned, upon his arrival, that our banns were published; he saw M. de Mercy's letter, and remained with us. Three days after, on the 27th of October, we were married. I was then nineteen, M. de Lescure twenty-five. He heard, three weeks after, that his grandmother had another attack, and we both went to visit her. She passed two months between life and death, in continual vomitings, frequent attacks of apoplexy, and with an open cancer. She articulated with difficulty a few words to pray to God, and to thank us for the care we took of her. Never did any one die with a resignation so angelic. Her titles could no longer be engraven upon her tomb; but the peasants inscribed upon it, "*Here lies the mother of the poor;*"

—a truly glorious epitaph. M. de Lescure regretted her extremely. Eleven years before her death, she had made a will, such as her situation then admitted of. It was burdened with a great number of legacies. Had she been able to reflect on the debts her grandson had to pay, and the effects of the Revolution upon his fortune, she would certainly have changed her intentions. The will wanted some necessary formalities, and was, therefore, not binding. But M. de Lescure scrupulously conformed to it. He even wished that the domestics, who had since that time deserved reward, but who were not mentioned in the will, should not imagine themselves forgotten; and he gave all of them donations in the name of his grandmother, as if they had been left by her.

In the month of February 1793, we took the resolution of emigrating. M. Bernard de Marigny accompanied us. He was the relation and friend of M. de Lescure, a naval officer, and Chevalier de St Louis, and had distinguished himself in his profession. He was extremely handsome, tall, and possessed great bodily strength; was gay, spirited, loyal, and brave. Never have I seen any person so obliging; ever ready to do what was agreeable to others; and to such a degree, that I remember, as he had some knowledge of the veterinary art, all the peasants of the canton were in the habit of coming to ask his advice when they had sick cattle. He was extremely lively, and, when excited, his spirits became almost immoderate. As his name will have to appear frequently in these Memoirs, I thought it necessary to make him known. He was then forty-two years of age.

We arrived at Paris. The disrepair of our car-

riage detained us there a considerable time. I could not be presented to the King, as, since his Majesty had come to Paris, all presentations had been suspended. I went to the Tuilleries, to the house of Madame la Princesse de Lamballe. She was the most intimate friend of my mother, and she received me as if I had been her daughter. The next day, M. de Lescure went to the Tuilleries. The Queen condescended to say to him, "I know you have brought Victorine: There is no court now; but I wish to see her notwithstanding. Let her come to-morrow at noon to the Princesse de Lamballe's." M. de Lescure gave me this flattering order, and I went to the Princess. The Queen embraced me, and we all withdrew into a closet; and, after some words full of goodness, her Majesty said to me, "And you, Victorine, what do you intend to do? I suspect you are come here for the purpose of emigrating." I replied, it was the intention of M. de Lescure; but that he would remain at Paris if he thought he could be useful to her Majesty. The Queen reflected for some time, and said to me, in a very serious tone, "He is a good subject; he has no ambition, let him remain." I replied to the Queen, that her orders were laws. She spoke to me afterwards of her children. "It is a long time since you have seen them; come to-morrow at six to the house of Madame de Tourzel, and I will bring my daughter there." She at that time found consolation in superintending the education of Madame Royale; and Madame de Tourzel had the charge only of M. le Dauphin.

After the departure of the Queen, Madame la Princesse de Lamballe expressed to me how much she rejoiced in the reception I had met with. I

said I felt the full value of it, and that M. de Lescure would certainly remain. She recommended the greatest secrecy upon what had passed.

The next day I went to Madame de Tourzel's. The Queen entered with Madame Royale. She came to me, and said, in a low voice, warmly pressing my hand, "Victorine, I hope you stay with us?" I answered, "Yes." She again pressed my hand. She then went to converse with Mesdames de Lamballe and de Tourzel, and raising her voice in the course of the conversation, said, "Victorine remains with us." After that, M. de Lescure went every day to the Tuilleries, and on each day the Queen addressed him.

Yet we soon felt uneasy in our situation. The emigration increased rapidly; M. de Lescure was blamed for not joining in it, and it seemed to me that his reputation would suffer. On coming to Paris, he had announced his design of emigrating; and it happened that he had changed his resolution precisely two days after the decree for confiscating the property of the emigrants. This was a terrible circumstance;—everybody wrote to him in the strongest terms. In my anxiety, I desired Madame de Lamballe to speak again to the Queen. Her Majesty desired her to repeat to me word for word her answer. "I have nothing more to say to M. de Lescure; it is for him to consult his conscience, his duty, his honour; but he ought to remember, that the defenders of a throne are always in their proper place when near their King." I then became easier, certain that the Princes would approve of those who remained to defend the King. Their cause was the same, and they were in constant correspondence.

When M. de Lescure knew the answer of the Queen, he hesitated no longer. "I should be contemptible in my own eyes," said he to me, "if I could balance an instant between my reputation and my duty. I ought above all to obey the King. I may suffer from it, but at least I shall have no self-reproach. I esteem the emigrants too much not to believe that each of them would conduct himself as I do were they in my place. I hope I shall be able to prove, that if I remain, it is neither from fear nor avarice; and that opportunities will occur here, as well as out of France, to prove it. If they should not, I shall have sacrificed my honour also to the King, but I shall only have done my duty."

Two months after, M. de Calvimont Saint-Martial came from Coblentz to pass some days at Paris. I obtained permission to desire him to inform my uncle of Lorges that M. de Lescure had private orders.

M. de Marigny, seeing that M. de Lescure did not set out, and that he was constantly at the palace, said to him, that, without demanding any confidence, he esteemed him too much not to follow his fate. We answered for him to Madame de Lamballe; and she succeeded in procuring him orders to remain. She gave them in charge to M. de Lescure; but the most absolute secrecy was always enjoined, not to give suspicions to the National Assembly.

We lodged at the hotel Diesbach, and received no company. M. de Lescure was often at the Tuilleries. Whenever he feared any commotion, he passed the whole day there.

On the 20th of June, I went alone to the Princess de Lamballe's. I was in court-mourning on

account of the death of the empress, which had already exposed some persons to insults from the people. But the carriage could not penetrate farther than the Carrousel. The crowd was immense. I saw the populace disarm and ill-treat the guards of the King. The gates of the Tuilleries were shut; nobody could get in, and I withdrew without having been observed.

The summer passed away nearly in this manner. M. de Lescure was always at the Tuilleries, or in public places, even among the mob, disguising himself, to judge better of the state of the public mind. As for me, I shunned society. I went but seldom even to the Princess de Lamballe's, yet saw all her uneasiness and distress. Never was there a person more courageously devoted to the Queen; to her she made the sacrifice of her life. A short time before the 10th of August, she said to me, "As the danger augments, I feel more strength. I am ready to die;—I fear nothing!" She had not a thought that was not for the King and the Queen. Her father-in-law, the Duc de Penthièvre, adored her. She had shown him the most tender attentions, and he died of the anguish occasioned by her cruel death.

About the 25th of July, Madame de Lamballe informed me that the Baron de Viominil had arrived from Coblentz, and that he was to take the command of the gentlemen who remained with the King. At that moment he came in; and she told him that M. de Lescure had received orders, and recommended him to the Baron. The 29th of July, my father, mother, and some others of my family, arrived in Paris, flying from Medoc, on account of scenes which had passed at Bordeaux, in which two priests had been massacred.

We ourselves were witnesses of a horrible deed committed in the street in which we lived. In the front of our hotel, a priest lodged who dealt in leather. He had excited the populace against him by saying, "that the assignats would raise the price of shoes, and that very soon they would pay twenty-two francs for them." From that moment they accused him of being a monopolizer. The next load of leather which came for him, a man of the national guards, a woman, and some children, stopped the cart, calling out, "A la lanterne!" (To the lamp-post! that is, hang him up at the lamp-post.) The priest descended to appease them, but could not succeed. They wished to carry by force this leather to the section, which was some doors higher up the street. He consented to it, and they all went there. We had been walking in the Champs Elysées, and on returning we saw the street full of people, but the tumult was not very great. Scarce were we in the hotel, when shoutings began. The priest was at the section; the people wished to have him delivered up to them. Some administrators wished to save him, others opposed it. We feared the disorder would increase, and we quitted the hotel. The crowd, some steps further on, broke the windows of a coffee-house, the master of which they accused of aristocracy, but said nothing to us. A moment after, the unfortunate priest was thrown from the window, and the people tore him in pieces.

The 9th of August, M. de Grémion, a Swiss officer of the King's constitutional guards, came to our hotel to occupy a lodging that M. Diesbach had reserved for him. He arrived in the evening, and by a happy chance was unobserved.

There was a rumour of a commotion the next

day. M. de Lescure was preparing to pass the night at the palace, when M. de Montmorin came in. He was governor of Fountainbleau, major of the regiment of Flanders; the King honoured him with his particular confidence, well merited by his virtues; and he had remained in Paris by his orders. "It is useless," said he, "to go to the palace to-night; I am just come from it. The King knows positively that they will not attempt an attack till the 12th. There will be a disturbance to-night; but it will be on the side of the arsenal. The people wish to seize the powder, and 5000 of the national guards are commanded to oppose them. Thus do not make yourselves uneasy; whatever you may hear, the palace is in safety. I return to it only because I am to sup with Madame de Tourzel."

Perfidious information had thus lulled the court into security, and deceived us likewise.

CHAPTER II.

THE TENTH OF AUGUST—FLIGHT FROM PARIS.

TOWARDS midnight we began to hear marching in the streets, and a gentle knocking at the doors. We looked out of the windows and saw it was the battalion of the section, that assembled with little noise. We imagined it was for the attack of the arsenal. Between two and three in the morning, the tocsin was heard. M. de Lescure, extremely uneasy, could not remain at home, and, arming

himself, he went out with M. de Marigny, to see if the populace assembled towards the Tuilleries. My father and M. de Grémion had arrived so recently, that they had no cards of admission to the palace. They were therefore obliged to remain, but the cards would have been of no service. M. de Lescure and M. de Marigny endeavoured in vain to penetrate by some of the avenues they knew so well. Piquets of the national guards defended the entry of each gate, and prevented the defenders of the King from approaching. M. de Lescure, after having gone round the Tuilleries, and seen M. Suleau massacred, returned to disguise himself as one of the populace; but scarcely was he in the hotel, when the cannonade began. Despair seized him. He could not forgive himself for not having penetrated to the palace. We at first heard the cry of "Help! *see the Swiss! We are lost!*" The battalion of the section returned, and were joined by three thousand men, armed with pikes newly made, from the faubourg. For a minute we believed the King was successful; but very soon the cries of "Vive la Nation! Vivent les Sans Culottes!" succeeded those we at first heard. A deadly feeling took possession of us.

M. de Marigny had been separated from M. de Lescure. He was carried forward by the crowds that attacked the palace. At the beginning of the attack, a woman was wounded at his side; he took her in his arms, and, carrying her out, he escaped the horrid situation of marching against the King he wished to defend. It was impossible for some others to avoid this misfortune.

M. de Montmorin reached our hotel after escaping a great danger. He saw himself followed by

four of the national guard, drunk with blood, who wanted to fight with him. He went into a grocer's shop, and asked for a glass of brandy. The four guards furiously entered with him. The grocer suspected that M. de Montmorin had come from the palace, and, assuming the air of an acquaintance, said to him, "Ah, well, cousin, I did not expect you to come from the country to see the end of the tyrant! But come, let us drink to the health of these brave comrades, and the nation:" and thus he was saved by the presence of mind of this good man, who did not even know him; but it was for a short time, for he was massacred the 2d of September.

Many other persons came to ask an asylum from us. We passed the day in cruel apprehensions. They massacred the Swiss in our neighbourhood; the inscription upon the door of our hotel was *Hotel de Diesbach*, and many passengers remarked it. M. de Lescure had been pointed at as a Knight of the Dagger. This was the name the people had given to the secret defenders of the King. Happily they were ignorant of the arrival of M. de Grémion. Besides, we were liked in the street, because we purchased all we wanted from their shops. The evening was expected with impatience, that we might leave the hotel. We agreed to repair secretly, and in disguise, to the house of an old female servant who lived in the street de l'Université, fauxbourg St Germain. My father and mother went out together, and arrived there without meeting any accident. I went with M. de Lescure, and begged that he would leave his pistols, as I found they would make him be known as a knight of the

dagger. He yielded, from compassion for my situation. I was then seven months gone with child.

We went by the alley de Marigny, and from thence we entered Les Champs Elysées. They were deserted; and all was obscurity and silence, except the firing at the Tuilleries, heard in the distance. Suddenly we distinguished the voice of a woman, coming towards us, and entreating protection. She was pursued by a man, who threatened to kill her. She darted towards M. de Lescure, and seized his arm, crying, "Defend me, sir!" He was extremely embarrassed, unarmed, and held by two women, who clung to him, and were almost in a swoon. He endeavoured in vain to disengage himself to go to the man, who, levelling his gun at us, said, "I have killed several aristocrats to-day, and this will be some more." He was completely drunk. M. de Lescure asked him what he wanted with this woman. "I asked her the way to the Tuilleries, to go and kill the Swiss." In reality, he had not at first intended to do her any harm; but having been frightened, and taken flight without answering, he had pursued her. M. de Lescure, with his usual presence of mind, said to him, "You are right; I am going there also." The man then began to converse with him; but from time to time he raised his musket, saying, that he suspected we were aristocrats, and that he must at least kill that woman. M. de Lescure wished to disarm him; but the woman and I clung to his arms more and more, without knowing what we did. At last he persuaded the man that we were going to the Tuilleries. He then wished to accompany us; but M. de Lescure said to him, "I have my wife here,

who is with child, and near her time. I am taking her to her sister's, and then I shall join you." They agreed upon a place of meeting before they parted.

I desired to leave the walks for the high road which divides the Champs Elysées. Never shall I forget the spectacle that presented itself to my eyes. On the right and left were the Champs Elysées, in which more than a thousand persons had been massacred during the day. The most profound silence and obscurity now reigned around. In front, we saw the barracks of the Tuilleries in flames, and heard the firing and cries of the populace. Behind us, the buildings of the barrier were also on fire. We wished to get into the walks on the right, and gain the bridge of Louis XV.; but the swearing and shouting heard that way deterred us. Terror seized me; and I drew away M. de Lescure to the left side, along the gardens of the faubourg St Honoré. We arrived at the place Louis XV., and were going to cross it, when we saw a mob coming out of the Tuilleries by the draw-bridge, and firing muskets. We took then to the street Royale, and thus to the street St Honoré. We passed through a crowd of men, armed with pikes, hooting ferociously. The most part were drunk.

I had lost my senses so completely, that I went on, crying, "*Vivent les Sans-Culottes! Illuminez! Cassez les vitres!*" and repeated mechanically the vociferations I heard. M. de Lescure could not calm me, nor prevent my cries. At last we arrived at the Louvre, which was dark and solitary; passed the Pont Neuf, and reached the Quay.

The most profound silence reigned on this side of the Seine, whilst we saw on the other bank the flames of the Tuilleries, which threw a gloomy light

on every object; and heard the noise of the cannon, the discharge of musketry, and the hallooings of the multitude. It was a striking contrast. The river seemed to divide two different regions. I was exhausted with fatigue, and unable to reach the place to which my mother had retired. I slept in an obscure street of the faubourg St Germain, at the house of an old housekeeper of M. de Lescure. I found there two servants, who had come to conceal some diamonds, and other things of value, which they had secured at the risk of their lives; for the populace massacred all those whom they supposed had carried off anything. I learned from them that my mother was safe, and begged of them to tell her of my safety. They could not, however, return to her; and she passed the night in anguish; while my father wandered about the town, to discover, if possible, what had become of me, which they did not learn till the next morning.

We found, by two or three women who had remained at the hotel Diesbach, that the mob had been employed the whole night in massacring the Swiss in our street. Agatha, my maid, had a man killed at her side, when she herself was carrying to one of the Swiss guards clothes for disguising himself. Next day the carnage continued. M. de Lescure, notwithstanding my entreaties, went to obtain news of our friends, and saw two men murdered.

We remained eight days in our asylum; but my mother and I visited each other disguised as common people. One day returning from her, M. de Lescure with me, and passing before a guard-house, a volunteer, seated before the door, said to his companions, "There are many knights of the dagger about; they are disguised, but they will be soon

known." I concealed my emotion; but, on entering the house, I fell lifeless.

The administrators of the section of the Roule were said to be tolerably good; but we durst not return to the hotel Diesbach, and retired to a furnished lodging in the street of the University. It was here that my mother, already overwhelmed with misfortunes, was seized with an inflammatory fever, on learning, by the public rumour, that Madame de Lamballe had been transferred to the Force. When she was a little better, we thought of leaving Paris. Every day there were numerous arrests, and we expected our turn, yet feared to hasten it by applying for passports. Heaven sent us a deliverer. M. Thomassin, who had been governor of M. de Lescure, was devoted to us, and determined to save us or perish. He was a man of talent and resources; a great swordsman, and very bold. Although much attached to M. de Lescure, he was a little connected with the Revolutionary party; and, such as I have described him, it would have been easy for him to acquire favour and influence. He was a commissary of police, and captain of the section de St Magloir. Having obtained a commission to purchase forage, he took us himself to the section, dressed in his uniform, talking the language of the day with all the boasting of one of the heroes of the sections. An honest secretary dispatched our passports without examination. M. Thomassin took afterwards all the other steps at the municipality.

The next day we thought would have proved fatal to us. M. de Lescure wished, with the assistance of M. Thomassin, to obtain two other passports; the one for M. Henri de la Rochejaquelein,

his cousin and friend, the other for Mr Charles d'Autichamp, both of the constitutional guards of the King. When they had been disbanded, the officers had received from the King himself orders not to emigrate, and to remain near him. M. d'Autichamp was twenty-three years of age, of a fine and noble figure, and had a distinguished reputation among the officers. These two gentlemen were in the palace on the 10th of August, and had miraculously escaped. M. d'Autichamp had killed two men in his own defence.

In order to rescue them from the imminent danger they were exposed to in Paris, M. de Lescure wished to employ the same means that had succeeded for us; but two witnesses being required to sign their passports, he applied to the master of the coffee-house, whose windows the mob had broken on the 8th of August. This person obligingly consented, and even promised to bring a second witness. M. de Lescure, his two friends, the witnesses, and M. Thomassin, still in his military dress, went to our section. M. de Lescure declared the gentlemen lodged in his house. The passports were promised, but they had to wait a few minutes till some other persons had been dispatched. During this interval, the second witness happened to throw his eyes upon a paper posted up in the hall. This was a new decree, which condemned to imprisonment in irons false witnesses of passports. The man, terrified, approached the secretary, and announced to him that he must decline appearing for these gentlemen, as they were, in fact, unknown to him. Having made this declaration in a low voice, the secretary alone heard him. He, being by great fortune a humane man, whispered to M. de

Lescure, "*You are lost! Save yourself.*" Then, affecting ill-humour, he said aloud, "That he had not time to write out their passports, and that they must call again." The gentlemen thus escaped.

At last we set out for Poitou on the 25th of August, my father, and mother, and me, all very poorly dressed. We went in a carriage with M. Thomassin in his full uniform. M. de Lescure rode on horseback, with a single servant.

Arrived at the barrier, we showed our passports, but were told that another was also requisite for the post-horses, with their description, and that we *must* go and ask for it at the section of St Sulpice. M. Thomassin alighted, and, the captain of the post happening to be an acquaintance, he obtained permission to proceed immediately. There was before us another carriage stopped for the same cause, but to whom the captain refused the same favour. This carriage resolved to return to the section. Our postilion, who was a bad man, and drunk, chose to return also, and followed at full gallop the first carriage, in spite of the cries of M. Thomassin. As we reached the section, the people collected round the carriage, crying, "*A la lanterne, à l'Abbaye!*"—"*These are Aristocrats who are escaping.*" M. Thomassin alighted, showed our passports, and displayed all his commissions. The commissaries remembered having seen him on various occasions. He obtained leave to proceed. Meanwhile, the tumult and clamours augmented round the carriage; and when M. Thomassin came out, the populace seemed to wish to oppose our departure. M. Thomassin then began to harangue them from the top of the steps before the door of the section. He displayed again his commission; said that we were

his relations, and that we went to purchase forage for the army; and, affecting to abandon himself in his enthusiasm, he exhorted all the young men to fly to the defence of their country; and swore that, his mission fulfilled, he would return, and put himself at their head, to fight for liberty; "and now, my friends, repeat with me, *Vive la nation!*" Whilst the excited populace applauded him, he threw himself into the carriage, ordered the postilion to drive off, and we took again the road to Orleans.

This postilion exposed us to a still greater danger. A league from Paris, we met a detachment of the Marseillais; it was the rear-guard of the troops that went to Orleans to seek the prisoners, whom they afterwards put to the sword at Versailles, on their way to Paris. The postilion took it into his head to drive through the very middle of them, throwing down two or three. In an instant we saw guns levelled at us. M. Thomassin showed himself at the coach door. "My comrades," said he to them, "kill this rascal. *Vive la nation!*" On seeing the uniform and the manners of M. Thomassin, they were appeased.

The soldiers we met on the road, in numerous columns, going to join the armies, were insolent, stopped and insulted carriages; but our Parisian captain, presenting himself, and crying, "*Vive la nation!*" extricated us from every difficulty.

At the barrier of Orleans, where we arrived in the evening, our passports were demanded—the people collected about us, inquiring eagerly, and with uneasiness, whether it was true that the prisoners were going to be taken away. They told us, these prisoners were good people, that the town

was devoted to them, and would take their defence, if necessary.

I was much moved by these sentiments, and the scene we had here will be ever present to my memory.

After Beaugency, we arrived at a village where our passports were again demanded.

As soon as the people knew that there was a captain of the national guard of Paris, they begged him to come out and review fifty volunteers of the village, who were going to join the army. M. Thomassin alighted immediately, gravely drew his sword, made a patriotic speech to them, and got into the carriage again, amid the cries of "*Vive la nation!*"

We met with many similar adventures; but the Parisian uniform had everywhere great power.—M. Thomassin played his part admirably; he had quite the ascendancy of manners of a general; and, thanks to him, we travelled a road covered with forty thousand volunteers without being arrested, or even insulted.

At Tours we learnt there were disturbances at Bressuire, the very town near which our estate of Clisson was situated.

We stopped in the suburbs of Tours. But M. de Lescure continued his route to Poitou.

CHAPTER III.

DESCRIPTION OF THE BOCAGE—MANNERS OF THE INHABITANTS—FIRST EFFECTS OF THE REVOLUTION—INSURRECTION OF AUGUST 1792—THE PERIOD WHICH PRECEDED THE WAR IN LA VENDEE.

We passed two days in tolerable tranquillity in the suburbs. There was, however, at the time, some slight tumult in the town. The people made the poor women who did not choose to hear mass from the constitutional priests, ride through the town upon asses.

M. de Lescure sent us an express as soon as he knew the true state of Poitou. He told us that everything was quiet there, and that we might continue our journey. We took the road of Saumur. In a village through which we passed, a peasant on duty stopped the carriage, and insisted on seeing our passports, and opening our trunks. This, as our female servants, who had the keys, were not with us, embarrassed us extremely. The people of the village began to collect. M. Thomassin asked for the commanding officer, showed him our passports, and complaining of the insubordination of the soldiers, desired the sentinel should be sent to prison. The officer apologized, and bowed respectfully. We arrived at Thouars.

This town had embraced with warmth the popular party. The insurrection of some neighbour-

ing districts, against which the national guard had marched, augmented the fermentation. They allowed us, however, to pass, after having rummaged and overturned our trunks, and opened pots of sweetmeats, seeking for gunpowder. At last we arrived at Clisson. The chateau of Clisson is situated in that part of Poitou named *Le pays du Bocage*, but known since the civil war by the glorious name of *Vendée*. The Bocage comprehended a part of Poitou, of Anjou, and of the county of Nantes, and makes now part of four departments, Loire-Inférieure, Maine-et-Loire, Deux-Sévres, and Vendée. Its limits were the Loire to the north, from Nantes to Angers; to the west, the marshy countries along the sea-coast; to the south and east, a line beginning at Sables, and passing between Luçon and La Roche-sur-Yon, by Fontenay, La Chataigneraie, Parthenay, Thouars, Brissac, and ending at the Loire, a little above the bridge of Cé. The war did not extend beyond these limits permanently.

This country differs in its aspect, and still more in the manners of the inhabitants, from most of the other provinces of France. It is formed in general of small hills, unconnected with any chain of mountains. The valleys are neither deep nor wide; inconsiderable streams run through them in various directions, towards the Loire, or the sea; others uniting, form small rivers. Granite rocks appear everywhere. It may easily be conceived that a country without either chains of mountains, rivers, extensive valleys, or even a general slope, forms a sort of labyrinth. You scarcely find any hill sufficiently elevated above the others to serve for a point of observation, or to command the country.

Approaching Nantes along the Sévre, the country assumes an aspect of more grandeur. The hills are more elevated and steeper. The river is rapid, and flows between high banks; and the general appearance becomes wild instead of rural. The eastern part of the Bocage is comparatively level and open. The whole country, as may be supposed from the name, is well wooded, although without extensive forests. Each field or meadow, generally small, is fenced with a quickset hedge, and trees very close together,—not high nor spreading, the branches being lopped off every five years, twelve or fifteen feet above ground. The soil is not fertile in grain; and being often left untilled, becomes covered with broom and furze. There is much grass land and pasture, and the landscape is in general very green, and varied with many dwellings and farm-houses, the flat tile roofs of which, together with the steeples of churches, peep here and there through the trees: the view, in general bounded, extends occasionally to a few leagues.

Besides two main roads running through the country, one from Nantes to Rochelle, the other to Tours and Bourdeaux by Poitou, it is intersected by cross roads in all directions, narrow and deep, between hedges and trees arching over; miry in winter, and rough in summer; and, when they happen to follow the declivity of a hill, often serving, at the same time, for the bed of a rivulet. In some instances, these cross roads ascend the heights by irregular steps over rocks. At the end of each field, almost, you meet with a short turn or a branching off, which leaves the traveller in uncertainty what course to follow, finger-posts being unknown. The inhabitants themselves are frequently

at a loss when they happen to go two or three leagues from home. There are no great towns in the Bocage; small ones, of two or three thousand inhabitants, are dispersed over the surface. The villages are not numerous, and distant from each other. The ground is divided into small farms, each inhabited by a family and some servants.

It is seldom that a farm yields to the proprietor more than 600 francs a-year; the revenue is principally from grazing. The gentlemen's residences were built and furnished without magnificence, and had neither extensive parks nor fine gardens. Their owners lived without pomp, and even with extreme simplicity. When called to the capital on business or pleasure, they generally did not return to the Bocage with the airs and manners of Paris. Their greatest luxury at home was the table, and their only amusement field-sports. At all times the gentlemen of Poitou have been celebrated sportsmen. This exercise, and the kind of life they led, accustomed them to fatigue, and to the privation of those conveniences to which the rich attach generally such importance. The women travelled on horseback, and in litters or carriages drawn by oxen. The mutual relation that subsisted between the *Seigneur* (feudal lord) and his tenants, was rather peculiar. The proprietors did not lease out their land, but divided the produce with the farmer. A certain community of interest and personal acquaintance was the consequence of this system, often productive of mutual esteem and attachment. The farms being small, a *seigneur* had twenty or thirty such tenants, in the midst of whom he lived paternally, conversing with them about their affairs, the care of their cattle, and taking an interest in their

good or ill fortune, in which he was himself concerned. He went to the weddings of their children, and drank with the guests. On Sunday, the tenants danced in the court of the *Chateau*, and the ladies often joined. When there was to be a hunt of the wolf, the boar, or stag, the information was communicated by the curate to the parishioners in church after the service. Each took his gun, and went joyfully to the place assigned. The hunters posted the shooters, who conformed strictly to the orders given them, and this was very like their tactics during the civil war. With these habits, the inhabitants of the Bocage were an excellent people, mild, pious, hospitable, charitable, full of courage and vivacity; of pure manners, and honest principles. Crimes were never heard of; and lawsuits were rare. They were devoted to their landlords, and their manner, although free, was respectful; naturally suspicious, their confidence, when once bestowed, was unbounded.

The inhabitants of the towns and the small proprietors did not entertain the same sentiments towards the *seigneurs* and landholders; nevertheless, as they were always received with kindness and familiarity when they came to their houses, and many of them were under obligations, they also had an affection and respect for the principal families of the country. Some had embraced with warmth revolutionary opinions, but without any particular animosity. The horrors which have been committed were often strongly opposed by them.

In the year 1789, as soon as the Revolution commenced, the towns showed themselves favourable to it, while the people of the Plaine were foremost in burning and destroying. Those of the Bo-

cage, on the contrary, saw with dread and regret these excesses and innovations, which, far from adding to, could only disturb their happiness.

When the national guards were formed, they begged the seigneur in each parish to take the command, and they likewise chose them for mayors. The seignorial seats were ordered to be removed from the churches; but the order was not executed. In short, the peasants of the Bocage showed themselves uniformly discontented with the new order of things, and devoted to the gentlemen.

The new oath required of the priests, added to their discontent. When they saw themselves deprived of their curates, to whom they were accustomed, who understood their manners and their dialect, who almost all belonged to the country, whom they knew and respected, and saw them replaced by strangers, they ceased to attend the mass of their parish. The sworn priests were insulted or abandoned. The new curate of Echaubroignes was obliged to withdraw, without having been able even to obtain fire to light the tapers; and this universal agreement existed in a parish of four thousand inhabitants. The old priests concealed themselves, and said mass in the woods. In some places rigorous measures were attempted; and partial risings and considerable riots took place. The gendarmerie experienced some resistance; and the peasants began to evince steadiness and courage. An unfortunate man of the Bas-Poitou fought a long time with a pitchfork against the gendarmes. After receiving twenty-two cuts with a sabre, they

called to him, "Rends-toi." He replied, "Rends-moi, mon Dieu;" and thus expired.*

The insurrection of August 1792 was more important. After the 10th of August, the revolutionary measures had become still more severe; the refractory priests were warmly pursued, and their churches shut up. The harshness and insolence of the new administrators towards a people accustomed to mildness and justice, together with the news of the first successes of the coalesced powers, inflamed the public mind.

The peasants assembled armed with guns, scythes, and pitchforks, to hear mass in the fields, and to defend their curate, should there be an attempt to carry him off. A particular circumstance set all the people in motion. A man named Delouche, Mayor of Bressuire, had a quarrel with some other functionaries, and was driven from the town, in which he had proclaimed martial law. He then went to Moncoutant, where he excited the peasants to rise; and more than forty parishes united. M. Baudry d'Asson and Delouche, were the leaders of this multitude. Three other gentlemen, MM. de Calais, de Richeteau, and de Feu, took also a part. All the other seigneurs of the country, who had not emigrated, were still at Paris. This expedition was conducted with profound ignorance. M. Baudry did not want courage, but he had no skill, and was incapable of commanding ten men. He led to slaughter these unfortunate peasants. They hesitated whether they would

* This being a sort of a pun, cannot well be translated. Surrender!"—"surrender me, my God!"

march first upon Châtillon or upon Bressuire; at last, against the advice of M. Delouche, they decided upon attacking Châtillon, where the municipality was. They entered without resistance. The municipality withdrew to Bressuire. They burnt all their papers, and then marched to the latter town. According to all appearance, Bressuire would have been taken, but for a dreadful storm which dispersed the insurgents. This delay gave time to the national guard of the Plaine to succour the town: the peasants attacked it next day. The national guards, who were in the first fervour of their patriotism, showed sufficient courage, but it was not long necessary. The combat was short, and the insurgents were dispersed immediately. About a hundred poor peasants were killed, crying *Vive le Roi!* and about five hundred taken prisoners. Delouche made his escape, but was afterwards arrested at Nantes. M. de Richeteau was shot at Thouars, without a trial. M. Baudry succeeded in concealing himself, and evaded pursuit during six months. He appeared again in the war of La Vendée, in which he was killed. This victory of the national guard was stained with atrocities. In spite of the indignation of the greater part of the inhabitants of Bressuire, and the efforts of some good people, there were several prisoners massacred in cold blood. M. Duchâtel of Thouars, who afterwards in the Convention showed so much courage at the trial of the King, did all he could to save these unfortunate beings. They were murdered in his arms; and he was wounded in endeavouring to preserve them. MM. de Feu and de Richeteau, who, in consequence of some conferences, had the evening before consent-

ed to remain as hostages, were also massacred. Some of the national guard of the Plaine returned to their homes, carrying as trophies, at the points of their bayonets, noses, ears, and shreds of human flesh. The commission for the trial of prisoners at Niort showed, on the contrary, much gentleness and humanity. It pronounced no condemnation; all the blame was thrown upon the dead or the absent.

It was a few days after these sad events that we arrived at Clisson. The parish of Boismé, in which the chateau is situated, had taken no share in the revolt. As it almost bordered on the Plaine, the minds of the people were less heated, particularly as they had preserved their priests. The curate and the vicar had taken the oaths, protesting in it, however, against any thing in them contrary to the Catholic religion. They continued to acknowledge the former bishop, and not to obey the constitutional one. The municipality, who knew the danger of irritating the peasants upon this point, shut their eyes to this irregularity, to such a degree, that the vicar, having written to the municipality that he retracted even this species of oath, received no reply.

Very soon after our arrival, we heard of the massacres of September. We wished to conceal from my mother the death of Madame de Lamballe; but she suspected it, and interrogated us. Our silence confirmed her fears—she fell lifeless, and continued three weeks in a dangerous state. We succeeded in concealing from her the assassination of some other persons, particularly that of M. de Montmorin, the best friend of our family.

It was at that time that the nuns were turned

out of their convents. My mother had been educated at Angoulême, by her aunt, Abbess of St Auxonne, sister of the Duc de Civrac, and entertained for her much gratitude and attachment. We sent M. Thomassin to bring her to us; offering an asylum to other *religieuses;* but she came alone.

M. Henri de Larochejaquelein succeeded at last in escaping from Paris. All his family having emigrated, he found himself alone at the Chateau of La Durbellière, in the parish of St Aubin de Baubigné, one of those that had revolted. This circumstance, and being an officer in the King's guard, gave reason to fear some measure being taken against him. M. de Lescure invited him to come to Clisson, where there did not appear the least symptom of disturbance. I was at that time near my confinement. The Chateau was filled with women and old people. M. de Lescure was not a man to commit any imprudence; and besides, he was much loved, and looked upon as entirely devoted to religion and study. We lived unmolested. Henri de Larochejaquelein was then twenty; he had lived little in the world; his manners and laconic expressions had something in them remarkably simple and original. There was much sweetness in his countenance, as well as elevation. Although bashful, his eyes were quick and animated. He was tall and elegant; had fair hair, an oval face, and the contour rather English than French. He excelled in all exercises, particularly in horsemanship. We had many other guests at Clisson: M. d'Auzon, an infirm and respectable old man, a near relation of M. de Lescure, and who had acted towards him as a father; M. De-

sesserts, our neighbour, a man that the family of Lescure had always loved, and who, for many years, had inhabited the chateau with his children. One of his sons, a naval officer, had emigrated. M. de Lescure was much attached to another, destined for the church, who, although he had not yet taken orders, was required to take the oath; which refusing, he had been obliged to live at Poitiers, under the superintendence of the police. Both the father and son were men of talents and worth; Mademoiselle Desessarts possessed the same qualities. There was at the same time at Clisson, a Chevalier de ———, a distant relation. The Revolution had ruined him, and he had taken refuge among us. He was a man of fifty, short, fat, good-natured, foolish, and a coward. In his youth he had been intended for the church; and then he was very dissipated. Since he had entered the army he had become a bigot to a ridiculous degree.

Such was the society that inhabited Clisson. They confined themselves at home from prudence, neither making nor receiving any visits. Our domestics were numerous, almost all trusty, and devoted to us and our opinions. The maître-d'hotel, and the *valet-de-chambre surgeon* of Madame de Lescure, were nevertheless very revolutionary; but M. de Lescure kept them in his service from respect for the wishes of his grandmother, to whom they had paid the most devoted attentions, and who had recommended them in her last moments.

In the evening of the 31st of October, I was brought to bed of a daughter. At any other time I should have wished to nurse her; but I foresaw that soon or late the Revolution would reach us, and I wished to be at liberty to follow M. de

Lescure wherever he might go, should it be to a prison, if he were taken, or to the war, in which, if it should break out, he had resolved to join. I therefore hired a nurse for my child.

The King perished. MM. de Larochejaquelein and de Lescure had charged some friends to give them notice, if any measures were taken to save him. Nothing was attempted. It may easily be imagined the profound grief we were thrown into on hearing of this outrage. For many days there was nothing but weeping in the Chateau.

When the worst of the winter was past, my mother thought of returning into Medoc. She wished to take me along with her, but I could not think of leaving M. de Lescure, and he would not have consented to absent himself from Poitou. He foresaw that soon or late the peasants, continually vexed and tormented, would at last revolt, and he would then wish to command them. My father remained for the same reason. Travelling was besides very dangerous, much more so than remaining on the same spot. In the midst of these irresolutions the war broke out.

I am now come to a period of awful celebrity. It may be seen that this war was not, as has been said, fomented by the nobles and the priests. The unhappy peasants, wounded in every thing that was dear to them, subjected to a yoke, which the happiness they had formerly enjoyed made them feel still heavier, revolted at last, and chose for their leaders men in whom they had placed their confidence and affection. The gentlemen and the curates, proscribed and persecuted themselves, marched with them, and supported their courage. The insurrection began, from the impulse of the

moment, without plan, without concert, and almost without hopes; for what could a handful of men, destitute of means of any sort, effect against the forces of all France? Their first successes infinitely surpassed their expectations.

The minds of the people being universally disposed to resistance, the first example was followed generally without previous concert or understanding. The different chiefs did not even know each other. As to M. de Lescure, and our friends, I can affirm that they took no step that could lead to war. They foresaw it, they desired it even, but it was a vague and remote idea. Had they provoked the revolt by any secret means, or had actively laboured to excite the peasants, I should have known it; and certainly they were not in a situation to have it concealed. I shall endeavour to show how they were led to take a part in the insurrection. Throughout the whole country it began nearly under similar circumstances, and in the same manner.

CHAPTER IV.

COMMENCEMENT OF THE WAR.—DEPARTURE OF M. DE LAROCHEJAQUELEIN.—OUR ARREST.

The demand of three hundred thousand men for the army was the cause of an almost general rising in the Bocage. This movement assumed an importance at two remote points; Challans, in the Bas-Poitou, and St Florent in Anjou, upon the

banks of the Loire. There was no concert between these two insurrections; and it was even a long time before the parties concerned in the one district, knew what was passing in the other. At St Florent, the drafting had been notified for the 10th of March. The young men assembled there, almost determined to resist. When the administration saw they were so ill-disposed, they attempted to harangue them. The resistance increasing, they came to threats; the republican commander had next a cannon pointed, and soon after fired on the young men; none of them were killed. They rushed on the piece, and it was abandoned: the gendarmes and the administrators fled. The municipality was pillaged, the papers burnt, and the cash distributed. The rest of the day was spent in rejoicings. The young men then returned home, without well knowing what would become of them, or how they would escape the terrible vengeance of the republicans.

Jaques Cathelineau, of the village of Pin en Mauges, carrier and hawker of woollens, much respected among the peasants, was kneading the bread for his family, when he received intelligence of what had passed. He immediately took the resolution of heading his countrymen, and not leaving them a prey to the calamities ready to fall upon them. His wife supplicated him not to think of this. He listened to nothing; but, wiping his arms, and putting on his coat, he went forth instantly, and, assembling the inhabitants, spoke to them with energy of the signal punishment to which they would be subjected, if they did not defend themselves. The weight of Cathelineau's character, as a wise and pious man, and the courage and warmth

that animated his discourse, inspired all the young men. Immediately about twenty of them, arming themselves, prepared to march with him. They set out directly for the village of La Poitevinière, where Cathelineau, sounding the tocsin, assembled the inhabitants, spoke to them as he had to their neighbours, and with similar success.

His troop amounting now to more than a hundred men, he determined to attack a republican detachment of eighty men, stationed at Jallais, with one piece of cannon. They marched, recruiting all the way. The detachment was beaten. They made the men prisoners, and seized the piece, which the peasants surnamed *the Missionary*, and also arms and horses.

Encouraged by this first success, Cathelineau attacked the same day Chemillé, where he found two hundred republicans, and three pieces of cannon. The insurgents were already more than four hundred. They stood a first discharge, then, rushing upon their enemies, gained a complete victory.

Two other insurrections broke out at the same time in the neighbourhood. A young peasant named Forêt, of the village of Chauzo, somewhat better informed, and more intelligent than his companions, had returned to France, after having followed an emigrant, and appeared to exercise considerable influence over the young people of St Florent. The gendarmes came to arrest him. He expected it; and, as soon as he saw them approach, he fired, and killed one of them. He then ran to the church, sounded the tocsin, assembled the inhabitants, urged them to revolt, and raised a large troop in the neighbouring villages. Stoffet, garde-chasse of M. de Maulevrier, did as

much on his part; and, on the 14th of March, in the morning, these two troops joined that of Cathelineau. The same day they attacked Chollet, which is the most considerable town of the country. They had to encounter five hundred republicans, who had cannon. The combat was neither more uncertain nor longer than that of Chemillé; but the results were most important. They found there ammunition, arms, and money.

Easter approached, and the peasants, thinking they had done enough, wished to return home. The army was entirely dissolved, and every thing returned to its accustomed order. A republican column, sent from Angers, traversed the country, and found no resistance; but they dared not exercise vengeance. After Easter, there was a new rising, to drive away the republicans; but the peasants wished to have higher leaders, and applied to the gentlemen, requesting they would put themselves at their head. M. d'Elbée, who had taken no share in the first insurrection, was seated quietly by his wife, who had just lain in, when they came to him. M. de Bonchamp, a man of the first consideration in the country, was taken unawares, in the same manner. The insurrection of Bas-Poitou began the 12th of March, nearly at the same time as that of Anjou, and was more general. From Fontenay to Nantes, scarcely a parish submitted to the drafting; and they formed associations to resist the republicans. The most extensive were those of Challans and Machecoult. One Gaston, a barber, commanded the first. Having killed an officer, he dressed himself in his uniform. After taking Challans, he marched upon St Gervais, but was killed there. This Gaston

has since been absurdly mistaken for an officer of the same name, commanding at Longwy, who had opened the gates to the princes in the year 1792. For a long time the public believed that all the insurgents of La Vendée were commanded by this Gaston, whilst, in Poitou, his speedy death had left his name almost unknown.

The insurgents of the district of Machecoult had still greater successes, stained, unfortunately, by atrocities; it is the only place where a reproach of that sort was justly incurred.*

Soon after the insurrection, the peasants chose M. de Charette,† a man of family, for the chief of these two bodies of insurgents, which very soon became the most considerable army of Bas-Poitou. Till that moment he had taken no part in the insurrection. The men were under no discipline, and difficult to command; he probably could not prevent their cruelties, and certainly did not approve of them; but thought, perhaps, that he could depend more entirely upon men who had no mercy to hope for, nor terms to expect. In a short time

* Three hundred patriots, or republicans, were executed by parties of thirty men a-day; an imitation, on the part of the insurgents, of the worst cruelties of their enemies.

† This celebrated chief had been bred in the navy of France, and had held the rank of Lieutenant. He was undauntedly brave and loyal, but his conduct was stained with cruelty. His hatred to the revolution was so great, that it was usual to say of a man suspected of *incivisme*, he is such a patriot as Charette. He concluded peace with the republic on advantageous and independent terms, at Nantes, on 3d March, 1795. Renewing the war, he was made prisoner and shot by the Republicans. At his death, he behaved with the utmost fortitude, advancing to meet the party who were to fire, and exclaiming, "Vive le Roi!"

he was the principal chief of this district. Meanwhile, five or six small corps remained under their own particular commanders. On the side of Herbiers and of Chantonnay, another army was formed on the same day, commanded from the first by gentlemen, M. de Verteuil, M. de Bejarry, and some others. It was on this side that the insurgents obtained the most signal successes; and it was from hence the general name of Vendéens came. They fought a republican general, and took Herbiers, Chantonnay, and Pont Charran. M. de Royrand, who had been formerly an officer, and was much respected, was soon chosen their chief.

During all these transactions, we were perfectly quiet at Clisson, without suspecting anything. Such at that time was the state of inaction and stupor, that no one knew what was passing at the distance of a few leagues. M. Thomassin had gone to the estate of M. de Lescure, near Sables. In returning, he passed through the town of Herbiers, and found everything perfectly calm there; but he had not left it two hours, when he was overtaken by people flying at full gallop, who said that Herbiers had been taken by six thousand English just landed. He laughed at them, and continued his journey. On arriving at Bressuire, he found the report had reached it, and was anxiously questioned on the subject. The whole town was in alarm; two hundred volunteers were under arms, but none knew what to believe. M. Thomassin, who had continued to act the part of a patriotic captain, and always wore his uniform, inspired the constituted authorities with confidence. He made light of their fears, and said he would undertake to defend their town against all attacks. They took him at his

word, and exacted a promise that he would return that same evening; and he really did return to Bressuire, after having made his report to us, and raised our curiosity and expectations. The next day, he sent us notice that Herbiers and some other towns had been taken, but that it was not known whether by the rebels or by the disembarked troops. A landing appeared improbable; and yet such success, gained by peasants, did not appear more probable.

Every hour brought us absurd and contradictory accounts. M. de Larochejaquelein resolved to send a servant to the house of his aunt, Mademoiselle de Larochejaquelein, who lived at St Aubin de Baubigné, from which Herbiers was only four or five leagues distant. He wrote a trifling letter, charging the servant to bring us verbal intelligence. M. de Chevalier de ———, who was also a relation and friend of Mademoiselle, gave the servant, without telling us, a letter for her, sending a dozen of consecrated hearts, which he had painted on paper, with the following expressions: "I send you a small supply of consecrated hearts; those who have faith in them, succeed in all their undertakings." The servant was stopped at Bressuire, and his letter opened. As it was said that the insurgents had for their rallying sign a consecrated heart sewed to their clothes, the letter of the Chevalier produced a terrible effect. The next day, at seven in the morning, we were awakened by the information, that the chateau was surrounded by two hundred volunteers, and that twenty gendarmes were in the court. We supposed they had come to arrest M. de Larochejaquelein. We hid him; and then M. de Lescure went to inquire

of the gendarmes the occasion of their coming. They answered, that the municipality demanded that the Chevalier de ——— should be delivered up, and also all the horses, equipages, arms, and ammunition, that should be found in the chateau. M. de Lescure laughed, and said to them, that they seemed to take his house for a fort, commanded by the Chevalier; yet there was surely a mistake in the orders of the municipality, as the Chevalier was a peaceable and infirm man, who would die of fear, were they to arrest him, and that he would be responsible for him. As to the other things, he would deliver the horses, forage, and fire-arms, as he thought they might have occasion for them.

The brigadier of the gendarmes then took M. de Lescure apart, and said, that he entertained the same opinions as we did, and that he saw clearly a counter-revolution would soon take place. The insurgents, or the disembarked troops, he added, had defeated entirely the patriots at Montaigu. He said that it was necessary in the mean time, to satisfy the municipality in the best manner they could; and asked, as a favour of M. de Lescure, to bear testimony for him in due time, that he might preserve his place. My husband listened to all these confidential communications of the timorous patriot, without a reply; and we came off this time for a few bad horses.

The insurrection gained ground every moment. Bressuire was menaced. The municipality and authorities had withdrawn to Thouars. M. Thomassin had found means of making his escape two days after, and came to Clisson. He told us the cause of the visit of the gendarmes, and the his-

tory of the consecrated hearts. They wanted at first to burn the chateau, but he had succeeded in appeasing the first ebullition. We passed the day in joy, expecting the royalist army. The parishes in the environs of Bressuire had been disarmed, after the affair of the month of August. The most ardent among the peasants had been killed, or obliged to conceal themselves. Thus our neighbourhood was kept back, till they had received assistance. The next day we heard the rebels had been repulsed, and that the authorities had returned to Bressuire. This threw us into consternation. It was the signal of our ruin, as it became necessary for M. de Lescure to take a decisive part: the national guards were called together for the defence of Bressuire, and he had been for four years Commandant of his parish. There were in the chateau more than twenty-five men capable of bearing arms, and the orders for marching against the rebels might be expected before long. We should willingly have joined these; but we were ignorant where they might be, and we had no means of escape. We all assembled to decide upon this subject; Henri de Larochejaquelein, who was the youngest, spoke first. He said, with ardour, that he would rather perish, than take up arms against the peasants or the emigrants. M. de Lescure expressed himself to the same purpose. Every one agreed; and, in that perilous moment, none had any idea of proposing a timid counsel.

My mother then said, "Gentlemen, you are all of the same opinion; rather to die than live with dishonour!" She pronounced these words with firmness; and, seating herself in an arm-chair, said, "Well, we must die." M. Thomassin answered,

"No, madam, I will go to-morrow to Bressuire, and endeavour to save you;—perhaps I am become suspected by the patriots, from having left them; it is possible they may arrest me: But no matter, I am determined to run the risk." We made him our acknowledgments. M. Thomassin set out, and we all began our preparations. I sent my little daughter to the village with her nurse; and my mother, my aunt, the abbess, and myself, went to conceal ourselves at a farm. The gentlemen continued in the chateau, prepared for every thing, after having required of us not to remain with them. We continued during four hours in this farm, upon our knees in prayer, and dissolved in tears. At last M. Thomassin sent to tell us, that he had been well enough received—that there was nothing decided against us; and that, hitherto, there had been merely threats.

We passed an anxious week. Our servants could not enter the town without a pass, and they were searched with care. M. Thomassin could not write to us.

M. de Lescure and Henri had undertaken to teach me to ride; but I was so frightened, that, even when a servant held the bridle of my horse, and these two gentlemen were walking at each side of me, I wept from fear. But my husband said, that, at such a time, it was necessary to be inured to dangers. By little and little I became less fearful, and took, at a slow pace, some rides around the chateau. One morning we were all three on horseback, when the gendarmes were observed at a distance coming towards us. We forced Henri to gallop away. The gendarmes again demanded horses, and especially those of M. de

Larochejaquelein. He had one in the stable; M. de Lescure endeavoured to save it. The gendarmes told him that M. de Larochejaquelein was much more suspected than he was. "*I do not know why*," answered he. "*He is my friend and cousin, and our opinions are perfectly the same.*" The gendarmes asking where he was, he said, "*Out walking.*" They took away the horse, without saying anything more.

Meanwhile, we heard every day of new arrests. All the gentlemen that remained, most of them old and infirm, were imprisoned. Women were not spared, and we expected our turn. During these transactions, the order for drawing the militia arrived. Henri was comprehended in it, which increased our perplexity and distress extremely. Just then, an express arrived from Mademoiselle de Larochejaquelein to her nephew. The messenger was a young peasant, who gave us many particulars respecting the royalist army. Châtillon was taken, and all the parishes in the neighbourhood had joined the insurgents. The young man concluded by saying to Henri, "Sir, they say you will have to draw to-morrow for the militia at Boismé. The peasants will probably rise, rather than submit to be drafted. Come with us; the whole country wishes for you, and will obey you!" Henri answered, without hesitation, that he would follow him. The peasant then told him it would be necessary to take by-paths, and go round several leagues about, to avoid the patrols of the *Blues*, which was the name given by the peasants to the republican troops. M. de Lescure wished to accompany his cousin, but we opposed it; and Henri represented that their situations were not the same;

—he was not called upon to draw for the militia; —the peasants in his neighbourhood were not rising;—he could not leave Clisson without endangering the fate of a numerous family;—and that he did not know the actual state of the insurrection. "I go," said he, "to examine things more nearly, and to see if there is any rational hope. My departure will not be remarked; and if there be, in reality, anything to be done for the cause, then will be the time for you to act. At present it would be madness." We joined our prayers to these representations, and M. de Lescure at last reluctantly yielded to them. After this, Mademoiselle Desessarts wished to prevent even Henri from going, and said to him, that it would most certainly involve all the inhabitants of Clisson, and occasion their being arrested. Henri replied, he could oppose nothing to such objections, and that he should be wretched were he to draw persecution upon us. On this M. de Lescure said to him, "Honour and your own principles made you resolve on going; pursue your design. I feel already sufficiently miserable in not being able to follow you; and never will the fear of a prison lead me to prevent you performing your duty."—"Well! I shall deliver you if you are arrested!" cried Henri, throwing himself in his arms. I then observed in him that animated air, and eagle-look, which never left him afterwards.

After this affecting scene, the Chevalier de ——— told us he wished to set out with Henri, to join the royalists. Since the story of his intercepted letter, fear had turned his head. After some other objections, we begged him to consider that M. de Lescure had become answerable for him to

the municipality, and that it would be wrong to sacrifice him in this manner.

The Chevalier wept;—said we wished his death, and forced him to resist the will of God, who had inspired him with the desire, and given him the means, of saving himself. He then, with clasped hands, entreated of M. de Lescure permission to go away. My husband granted it, from pity and disgust; but we were now troubled on Henri's account. The Chevalier was fifty years of age, and unwieldy. We saw he would retard his companion; that he would not be able to walk nine miles in the night across ditches and hedges, and would be the occasion of Henri falling into the hands of some patrol. "When we hear a noise, he may save himself, and leave me."—"Do you suppose I am such a poltroon as you are?" replied Henri. "Shall I abandon any one who is with me? If we are discovered, I shall defend myself; and we shall either fall, or save ourselves together." The Chevalier then began kissing his hands, repeating, "He will defend me! he will defend me!"

At night, when the domestics were all in bed, Henri, armed with a stick and a pair of pistols, set out, with one servant, the Chevalier de ————, and the guide.

On the Sunday fixed for the militia ballot, our people attended in town. We were at breakfast, when suddenly the cry "To arms!" was heard, and we saw twenty gendarmes gallop into the court. On going down to them, they read an order from the municipality, for the arrest of M. and Madame de Lescure, M. d'Auzon, and all other suspected persons found at Clisson. My father and mother declared they would follow me to prison, and per-

sisted in this generous resolution in spite of our entreaties. M. de Marigny said likewise he was determined to share the fate of M. de Lescure.

The gendarmes held their pistols. Two of them placed themselves by my side, and followed me step by step. I asked to be allowed to retire to my apartment to dress, desiring them, at the same time, to observe, that, if I had intended it, I could have fled, or concealed myself. M. d'Auzon representing that he was extremely ill, they permitted him to remain. When the gendarmes saw that we received them very civilly, that the chateau was inhabited by women and old men, and that all our people were gone to draw for the militia, they began to soften. An expression of my mother's affected them extremely. When I was pressing her not to follow me, a gendarme said to her, "At all events, Madame, it is necessary you should go, for the order includes all suspected persons." —"You wish, then, to deprive me of the pleasure of sacrificing myself for my daughter!" By degrees the gendarmes became friendly to us, and concluded by telling us that the order had been issued ten days before; but it was thought the gendarmes of the country were not to be trusted with it, having shown such an unwillingness to the office. The municipality had therefore waited the arrival of troops then expected from a distance; and, having come the evening before from Berry, they had received the order. They then expressed their regret at having to arrest people so beloved in the country, and their inclination to do what they could for us. This good-will, which they showed more and more, was not purchased. None of us had a thought of offering them money.

sieged in his chateau of la Durbellière. We passed a miserable day; but in the evening, we saw the *heroes* of the preceding day returning in disorder, calling out, "Help, citizens! the brigands follow us. Lights! lights in your windows!" The terror became so great, that General Quétineau, who commanded, never was able to place a sentinel at the gate of the town. We began to hope, and to expect the royalists.

Henri had arrived at the house of his aunt, after a painful and perilous journey. Leaving the Chevalier de ——— there, he proceeded with some young men from the environs of Châtillon, to the rebel army of Anjou. It was then near Chollet and Chemillé. He arrived to witness a defeat, which made the insurgents retire to Tiffauges. MM. de Bonchamp and d'Elbée, who had for some time past commanded the army, Cathelineau, Stofflet, and all the other chiefs, agreed in telling him that all was lost. They had only two pounds of powder, and the army was disbanding. Henri, penetrated with grief, returned alone to St Aubin. He arrived there the very day that the Blues from Bressuire had reached Aubiers, and dispersed a small body, that for an instant had attempted to resist them. There was still no chief, nor point of union in these cantons. The peasants in the parishes unoccupied by republicans, hoisted the white flag, and went to join the army of Anjou. Henri imagined he could do nothing; but the peasants, hearing of his arrival, came in crowds, and entreated he would put himself at their head. They assured him, he would reanimate the whole country, and that in a single day he would have ten thousand men at his command. He did not hesitate; and declared himself their

chief. During the night, the parishes of Aubiers, Neuil, St Aubin, Echaubroignes, Cerqueux, d'Izernay, &c. sent their men—and the promised number was nearly completed; but the only arms these poor people had, were sticks, pitchforks, and spits! They had not above two hundred fire-arms, and these only fowling-pieces. Henri, however, had discovered sixty pounds of gunpowder in the house of a mason, which he had purchased for blowing up rocks. This was a treasure.

M. de Larochejaquelein appeared, in the morning, at the head of his peasants, and spoke thus to them: "My friends, if my father were here, you would have confidence in him. I am but a boy; but, by my courage, I shall show myself worthy of commanding you. Follow me if I go forward;—kill me if I fly;—avenge my death if I fall!" He was answered by loud acclamations. Before setting out, he wished to breakfast; and, whilst some of the peasants had gone to seek white bread for their general, he took a piece of their brown loaf, and ate it heartily along with them. This simplicity, in which there was no affectation, touched them extremely, without his being aware of it himself.

Notwithstanding all their zeal, these poor people were a little frightened. The most part had never seen fire, others had witnessed defeat, and they saw themselves almost all unarmed.

The troop, however, arrived at Aubiers, which the Blues had taken the evening before, and spread themselves around the village, marching behind the hedges in silence. Henri, with a dozen of good marksmen, glided into a garden near the place where the republicans were. Concealed behind

the hedge, he began to fire at them, the peasants supplying him with loaded guns. As he was a great sportsman, and very expert, almost all his shots told. He fired nearly two hundred, as did also a garde-chasse that was beside him. The republicans, provoked at thus losing men without seeing their enemy, and supposing they were going to be attacked in line, made a movement to place themselves in order of battle, on a height behind them. Henri seizing the moment, called out, "See them flying, my friends!" The peasants believing it, immediately leaped from their concealments, calling out "Vive le Roi!" The echoes augmented the noise; and the Blues, surprised by an attack so unforeseen, and so strange, took to flight in disorder, abandoning two small pieces of cannon, their whole artillery. The Vendéens pursued them to within half a mile of Bressuire. Seventy of them were killed, and many wounded.

Such was nearly, and particularly in the beginning of the war, the manner of fighting of the Vendéens. Their tactics consisted in spreading themselves silently behind the hedges around the troops of the Blues; they then fired from all sides: and on the least hesitation, or at the first movement of the republicans, they rushed upon them with loud cries. The peasants first ran to the cannon. The strongest or most active were previously selected to seize promptly the artillery, "*to prevent its doing harm*," as they used to say among themselves. They called to each other, "you are the strongest, get on the cannon." The chiefs always rushed the first to the attack. This was necessary to give courage to the soldiers, who were often a little intimidated at the beginning of the action. This manner of fighting

will appear no doubt singular, but it was adapted to the country. Besides, it must be remembered, that the peasants did not even know the exercise, and could hardly distinguish their right hand from their left. Some of the officers were scarcely better. The commanders and generals knew little of the military art. They consisted of youths, church-students, citizens, (bourgeois,) and peasants. Yet it was those who, first by their courage and enthusiasm, and then by talents which a short experience developed, made the republic tremble!—conquered a part of France,—obtained an honourable peace, —and defended their cause with more glory and success than all the allied powers!

Some facts will explain the success of the Vendéens, and the very great difference between their loss of men, and that of the republicans. The peasants, dispersed behind hedges, never exposed a front to the ravage of the enemy's fire. The troops of the line, without seeing their foes, fired according to custom, at the height of a man. The peasants aimed, and rarely missed. Thus five men fell on one side, to one upon the other. When the Blues were drawn up on more even ground, the peasants endeavoured to carry their point by greater rapidity. Their first efforts were always directed towards the cannon. As soon as the flash announced a discharge, they threw themselves on the ground to avoid it; then instantly rising, ran forward while the pieces were reloading, prostrating themselves again at each explosion; and in this manner they reached the battery, and attacked the men hand to hand. These defeats were terrible for the republicans, who were soon lost in the labyrinths of the Bocage, without any clew to guide

their retreat, and fell by small detachments into the hands of the peasants, or found themselves, without knowing it, near a village, at the mercy of its inhabitants. When our people, on the contrary, had failed in an attack, they dispersed without the enemy being able to overtake them, leaped over hedges, took by-paths, and returned home in the hope of mustering again in a few days, and being more successful. They were not discouraged, and repeated as they went, "*Vive le Roi! quand même.*"*

But the great and principal cause of the first success in La Vendée, was the courage and devotion of the royalists. The republican troops were composed of raw volunteers, or national guards; and enthusiasm did not supply in them ability and experience as among our brave peasants. It was neither their own will, nor the desire of defending their religion, their children, or their chief, that had enlisted the soldiers of the republic. Requisitions, and measures of terror, had filled their ranks; they, indeed, often fought reluctantly. Their generals received, without ceasing, contradictory orders from the administrators or commissaries; and they were often displaced without reason, as they had been appointed without merit. Weakness and incapacity presided in all their councils, as much as cruelty and injustice.

After the engagement at Aubiers, we expected that the rebels would follow up their successes, and reach Bressuire; but Henri thought it was necessary first to extricate the army of Anjou out of the desperate situation in which he had left it.

* *Quand même* means here *notwithstanding*. This by-word has been adopted on a late occasion by the Royalist party in the Chamber of Deputies.—*Translator.*

He travelled all night to overtake MM. de Bonchamp and d'Elbée; and carried them reinforcements, and also the cannon and ammunition he had taken.

The parishes of Anjou began to assemble again with fresh ardour; and, when the army was sufficiently strong, attacked the Blues, and fought them everywhere. Chollet, Chemillé, and all the places they had quitted, were retaken without much loss. M. de Bonchamp was slightly wounded in one of these engagements. For some time after the overthrow at Aubiers, agitation and disturbances reigned in Bressuire, and among the republican troops. A reinforcement of four hundred Marseillais arrived there, and insisted on putting the prisoners to death. They marched to the prison, and in spite of the orders of General Quétineau, and the resistance of all the authorities, they seized eleven unfortunate peasants, who had been taken in their beds some days before, because they were suspected of a correspondence with the rebels. These poor men passed under our windows, on their way to execution. When there, they were drawn up in a line; and the commandant of the Marseillais asked, if any persons were desirous of joining the soldiers in the execution? This excited horror in the inhabitants of the country; yet some people from St Jean d'Angély chose to join the Marseillais. The mayor of Bressuire still attempted to save the victims, but he was seized and carried off. They cut down the peasants with their sabres, who received death on their knees in prayer, and repeating "Vive le Roi!"

We expected a similar death. It appeared impossible to avoid it. But happily the Marseillais were ignorant of our retreat; and the patriots of

Bressuire and the country were incapable of betraying us. Our host, in particular, was full of zeal and anxiety for our safety. Two or three days after, he brought us one of the commissaries of the department, a foolish and talkative young man, but who seemed to favour us. He said, that the war had rendered the arrest of the nobles (gentry) necessary; but that it was not he who had wished to take this step towards us, although it had been thought extraordinary to see persons at liberty so naturally suspected as we were. He added, that the war was near a conclusion; that the woods and enclosures were to be razed, the inhabitants decimated, and the rest sent into the interior of France. "It is unpleasant," added he, "to come to this determination; but we are forced to it by the fanaticism of the peasants, who, in other respects, are good people. There is no instance in this country of a tenant deceiving his landlord." He further said, "Was it not a son of M. de Larochejaquelein who commanded at Aubiers? Do you know him?" "Yes," answered M. de Lescure.—"He is your relation too?" "He is." I trembled during this dialogue; but the unembarrassed and cool manner of M. de Lescure prevented any suspicion in the commissary, who besides had come from Niort, and did not know that Henri had lived at Clisson.

There was so much alarm in the town and army, that nobody thought of us. The confusion that prevailed in all the proceedings, and in the public mind, saved us as by a miracle. Every moment troops were arriving, and sometimes a panic seized the inhabitants. These were our happy moments. We hoped the town was on the point of being taken, and threw aside all idea of the dan-

ger we might run in the attack. M. de Lescure had no other expectation of deliverance, and looked for it as a means of joining the royalist army, and even wished to anticipate the moment, by escaping from Bressuire. He could not bear the idea of being kept inactive; and certainly had they transferred us to Niort, as was spoken of, he would rather have died than been led there, and thus have lost the hope he had in the promises of Henri. It was during this crisis we saw the Abbé Desessarts arrive. He was arrested at Poitiers, owing to the discovery of a correspondence with an emigrant; and the representatives of the people gave him his choice between death, or enrolling himself in a regiment. He put on the uniform, and was sent to Bressuire; then secretly came to see us, and concerted with my husband the means of rejoining the Vendéens. It was decided, however, that they would not thus hazard either their own lives or ours, unless we should be transferred to Niort.

Every night there were new arrests. Citizens suspected of aristocracy, and doubtful patriots, were imprisoned. They were on the point of making the generous mayor, who had opposed the massacre, share the same fate. Amidst increasing persecutions, Providence continued to preserve us.

Whilst every day added to our fears, a new incident occurred to redouble them. My mother received, by post, a letter from an emigrant priest in Spain, saying, in a very ill-concealed manner, that a counter-revolution was infallible, and that she might make herself easy.

The very next day our letters were opened at the post-office, and sent us unsealed. We trembled lest a similar one to that of the priest's should arrive,

and we were not even certain that it had not been read.

During this period, efforts for recruiting were continued in the parishes, which had not yet risen, but, so far from succeeding, they only augmented the number of rebels. The peasants were inflexible on this point; nothing could make them submit to the drafting. I shall cite two examples which took place, near the conclusion of our stay at Bressuire.

The little parish of Beaulieu received notice of the day on which the drafting was to take place. When the day arrived, not a single man was to be found in the village; the women alone remained. It was signified to them, that if the men did not return by the next day, the village should be burnt. The next day the houses were found deserted, and not a woman or child was to be seen. The village was burnt to the ground. After this terrible execution, they summoned in the same manner the parish of Saint-Sauveur. But notwithstanding the example of Beaulieu, all the inhabitants disappeared, except the mayor, who remained with some women, to attempt saving the village. They arrested him, and were on the point of setting fire to it, when they were stopped by learning that the royalists were near Bressuire.

On the first of May 1793, the agitation and disorder increased at Bressuire, in consequence of a report that the brigands had attacked Argenton-le-Château: in the evening it was known they had succeeded, and were directing their course towards Bressuire, and within three leagues of it. The troops were put under arms, but so panic-struck, that General Quétineau found great difficulty in forcing the cavalry to reconnoitre. A few horsemen

went a short way, and returned precipitately, saying they had seen at a distance a column of the enemy. On Quétineau going himself, he discovered it was a peasant ploughing his field with eight oxen! Through the night, the fears of the republicans increased every moment; and the expectation of being either massacred or carried away, kept us in agonizing terrors. At last, at break of day, the troops began to evacuate the town silently. General Quétineau, seeing the disposition of his soldiers, determined to retreat to Thouars. He had five thousand men, but he could not depend on them for the defence of Bressuire, the walls of which were in ruins. The castle stood in a good situation; but it was also in a state of dilapidation, as it had never been repaired since Dugueselin had taken it by assault from the English.

The retreat was tumultuous. In order that it might not be retarded, and from want of better means to carry off ammunition, Quétineau had directed that each soldier should take four balls in his knapsack; but they left almost the whole at Bressuire. The military chest even had been left behind, and a detachment came back to fetch it. Almost all the colours were abandoned. A great part of the Marseillais deserted. Most of the inhabitants followed General Quétineau, or fled to the neighbouring towns. During this retreat we expected our fate, not supposing we could be overlooked entirely. Our window-shutters were closed, and every time we heard a company halt before our door, we believed they came to seize us. At last, by degrees, the town became deserted, without their having thought of us, and we remained free.

The prisoners of La Forêt had been carried to

Niort, and thence to Angouleme, but none of them were killed. Our host came and begged of us to grant him an asylum at Clisson. He feared the town would be burned and sacked by the royalists, in revenge for the massacre of prisoners twice repeated at Bressuire, latterly by the Marseillais. He told M. de Lescure that the brigands loved the *noblesse*, and respected their dwellings. Many other inhabitants solicited the same favour. M. de Lescure said he would be happy to receive all who came to him, but that he could not conceive what advantage they could hope for in choosing that retreat. He then sent to Clisson for carts to convey the effects of those to whom he granted an asylum.

At eleven o'clock we were informed that the town was completely evacuated, and almost totally abandoned. We descended, and traversed the streets, where we saw only some women in tears. After passing the gates, M. de Lescure and I, leaving behind us my father and mother, who walked more leisurely, took by-paths, and arrived alone at Clisson. It is almost impossible to conceive what our feelings were on this deliverance! We could hardly credit the reality! We found at Clisson MM. Desessarts, D'Auzon, &c. The Abbé Desessarts, who since has always called himself Le Chevalier, had found means to desert, and joined us the same day. The chateau was also filled with fugitives from Bressuire. Towards the middle of the day we received intelligence that the royalists had changed their direction, and were not marching to Bressuire. M. de Lescure determined immediately on sending round to all the neighbouring parishes to inform the peasants of an appointed place of rendezvous, and where they should find leaders. He then set out instantly

for Châtillon, to obtain there ammunition and reinforcements, so as to occupy Bressuire before the Blues could return.

We began to make all the preparations. M. de Lescure had not communicated his designs except to M. de Marigny, the Chevalier Desessarts, and me. My parents had the same sentiments, but they had not the same youthful ardour. We concealed ourselves from them, fearing their objections and remonstrances. We four shut ourselves up in an apartment: and although the chateau was full of patriot refugees, the gentlemen practised the exercise, and I made white cockades.

About four o'clock M. de Lescure went to tell my mother that all the preparations were ready for escorting the women to Châtillon. "But if the patriots return to Bressuire," said she, "what will become of us?"—"By dawn to-morrow," replied M. de Lescure, "I shall be master of Bressuire. Forty parishes revolt this night by my orders."—"Ah!" cried my mother, sinking back, "we are lost!" She represented to him that he had not taken these measures with prudence or deliberation; that he was ignorant of the position of either the royalist or republican armies;—that probably there would be messengers from Parthenay to arrest us;—and that the parishes would rise without doubt, but with no chance of success if left to themselves. M. de Lescure could not listen to these observations; for he had suffered too much by remaining passively at home, and by having, in consequence of our first entreaties, delayed so long joining the revolt. He derived hope from the terror he had observed among the republican troops; as to his family, he thought he could find a place of safety for them; and, finally,

it appeared to him that if all the possible chances were so accurately weighed, no resistance to oppression could ever be undertaken. Once begun, it must be carried through; reason and courage then reconcile us with necessity; but a certain degree of daring temerity is requisite at first; self-devotion and enthusiasm must have the lead, and are, in fact, the true foundation of such enterprises.

MM. de Lescure and de Marigny set out, mounted on excellent horses. Scarce were they gone, when I saw a patriot from Bressuire steal trembling into the chateau, repeating, "They are there! they are there!" "Who?" "The brigands are at Bressuire," replied he. Leaving the patriot to lament with the other townspeople, I sent instantly after M. de Lescure, who found me, on his return, conversing with the terrified patriots. At the same moment, one of the farmers, who had gone for their effects, came back from Bressuire, and said that the brigands had taken his oxen, but that, on learning that they belonged to M. de Lescure, they said they would restore them, on a note from him. "I see you were right," said M. de Lescure, smiling, to the people of Bressuire. "I perceive the brigands have indeed a liking for us gentry. I shall send for my oxen, and save your property at the same time. You may remain here without apprehension."

After their second departure, less hazardous than the first, I reflected that, if the royalists should arrive without M. de Larochejaquelein at their head, they might be displeased with finding the chateau full of patriots. To guard against this, I first made all the refugees take off their cockades, observing, that it would not be prudent to show signs of particular opinion, when not prepared to defend them.

I then placed them all in a wing of the chateau, with injunctions to remain quiet. My father and mother were with my aunt, who was ill; and, having ordered every one to keep within doors, fearing some imprudence, I happened to be alone in the court, more from agitation than courage, when I heard the galloping of horses, and cries of "Vive le Roi!" It was M. de Lescure and M. de Marigny returning with M. de Larochejaquelein; they had met on the way with three other horsemen. At the sound of "Vive le Roi!" all the inhabitants of the chateau poured out. Henri threw himself into our arms, with tears in his eyes, and calling out, "I have then delivered you!"

During this joy, the patriots of Bressuire opened gently their door, and saw, to their great surprise, that it was ourselves, and all the people of the chateau, who repeated, "Vive le Roi!" M. de Lescure told their story to Henri, who said, the asylum was indeed well chosen, and that they had done most wisely, to shelter themselves from the brigands in their *own chateau!* We then offered to embrace some of the women, to reconcile them to the brigands; but they looked upon us as a species of monsters! We were all in a state of ecstasy.

Henri gave us many particulars respecting the army, praising, above all, the valour and enthusiasm of the peasants. We learned that there were several corps of rebels, commanded by different chiefs; that almost all were successful, but that no regular correspondence existed between them. He told us also, that M. de Charrette, one of the principal leaders, had surprised L'Ile de Noirmoutier. We asked how they had procured ammunition. He told us, that, at the attack of Argenton, each can-

non could only fire three times; but they had found powder there, and had then twelve charges, and had never before been so rich. These details, which previously would have been terrifying, now heightened our joy. Even my mother herself said, there ought now to be no hesitation; and that it was the duty of every gentleman to take arms. The traits of bravery among the peasants, related by Henri, filled us with admiration, and I gave myself up to hope with all the eagerness of youth.

Henri introduced to us a young man who accompanied him, M. Forestier. He was the son of a shoemaker of Chaudron, but had been brought up by M. de Dommaigné, and followed him from the beginning of the insurrection. He was seventeen, extremely handsome, and had just finished his studies. Henri said he was an officer in the Vendéen cavalry, very brave, and much esteemed by all the officers and soldiers.

M. de Lescure, Henri, and M. Forestier, set out soon after for Bressuire. M. de Lescure was eager to join the generals, and to be acquainted with them. My father, MM. de Marigny and Desessarts, were also to join them the next day. It was agreed that my mother and I, the women and old men, should leave Clisson, and remove to the Chateau de la Boulaye, belonging to M. d'Auzon, situated in the parish of Mallièvre, between Herbiers and Châtillon, in the centre of the insurgent country.

CHAPTER VI.

THE VENDEENS OCCUPY BRESSUIRE.—ACCOUNT OF THE ROYALIST ARMY.

EARLY in the morning I received a note from M. de Lescure, desiring me to expect him with Henri and twenty-four dragoons at Clisson. They brought with them the Chevalier de Beauvolliers, a young man of eighteen, who had been enlisted by force at Loudun, and sent to Bressuire. In the evening on which the town was evacuated, he found means of quitting his corps, and galloped full speed to carry the intelligence to the rebels. His gendarme uniform procured him a bad reception from the first soldiers he met; but a peasant officer, who was among them, was more disposed to trust him. M. de Beauvolliers proposed to him to go and cut down the tree of liberty at Bressuire. The peasant said, "Come along, then; but if you deceive me, I shall blow your brains out." "Agreed," answered M. de B. "for I am neither a traitor nor a poltroon." He was full of bravery and gentleness, and became aide-de-camp and intimate friend of M. de Lescure. None of the other dragoons who came with these gentlemen had any military or very respectable appearance. Their horses were of all colours and sizes; some had pack-saddles, with ropes for stirrups; wooden shoes for boots, pistols at their girdles, with guns and sabres suspended by pack-threads! Some had white cock-

ades, others black or green. All of them, however, had a consecrated heart sewed upon their coats, and a chaplet hanging at their buttons. In contempt of the Blues, they had fastened to their horses' tails tri-coloured cockades, and epaulettes taken from them. The officers were a little better equipped than the soldiers, but had no distinguishing mark. This troop came for the purpose of showing themselves at the gates of Parthenay, that the march of the army towards Thouars might be the better concealed.

The soldiers sat down to breakfast; the peasants from the neighbouring parishes crowded from all parts to join them. Women came with hatchets in their hands, after having cut down the *tree of liberty*. The chateau was full of people, who ate, drank, sung, and repeated with acclamations, "Vive le Roi!" Meanwhile M. de Lescure informed us, that he had been received with open arms at Bressuire: That he was considered as the chief of all the parishes in the Canton, and appointed one of the council of war. My father, MM. de Marigny and Desessarts, were expected with impatience. Good officers were much in request, as the army was very deficient in that respect.

In the midst of this conversation, we heard a violent tumult in the court. The Vendéens had tied their horses there, and, according to custom, left no sentinels. Three inhabitants of Bressuire, whose wives were sheltered at Clisson, had come for them. They were in the uniform of the national guard, well armed, and on horseback. Seeing so many horses in the court, they imagined, without examination, that a detachment from Parthenay had come to carry us away; and on meet-

ing a servant boy of fifteen, addressed him with, "Good day, citizen." The child called out, "There are no citizens here. Vive le Roi! To arms! See the Blues!" Instantly the peasants rushed furiously out with their sabres. My father and I ran, and threw ourselves between them and the three men they were going to attack. We explained to the peasants that these men only came to carry away their wives, who were now on their knees supplicating mercy; but they would listen to nothing, till M. de Larochejaquelein addressed them. While he spoke, we made the three men enter the house, change their dress, and put on the white cockade: but, to calm the peasants, they were obliged to spit upon the tri-coloured cockade, and call out, "Vive le Roi!" Towards mid-day M. de Lescure and Henri set out for Parthenay, and we for Bressuire; giving permission to the refugee patriots to remain at Clisson as long as they should consider themselves more in safety there than elsewhere. They were honest and peaceable people.

We went in a carriage escorted by armed servants, and, as we drew near the town, perceived the Vendéens. They knew who we were, and began to call out "Vive le Roi!" We repeated it with them, shedding tears of joy. I perceived about fifty on their knees at the foot of the crucifix. Nothing interrupted their devotion.

The town was occupied by about twenty thousand men, but of whom not more than six thousand had fire-arms. The rest carried scythes fixed on handles, (a frightful-looking weapon,) blades of knives, sickles fixed on sticks, spits, or great massy clubs of knotted wood. All the peasants were intoxicated with joy, and believed themselves in-

vincible. The streets were full, the bells rung, and they had made a bonfire in the square with the tree of liberty and the papers of the administration.

The gentlemen went to seek the generals, and I walked about the town with my maids. The peasants asked me if I had been at Bressuire before. I told them of my having been a prisoner there, and how they had delivered me. They were all happy to have saved a *lady*. They told me the emigrants were going to return, and assist them in restoring their king and their religion. They then desired to show me Marie-Jeanne, a twelve-pounder, from the Chateau de Richelieu, where it had originally been placed by the cardinal with five others. It was of very fine workmanship, and loaded with ornaments and inscriptions to the glory of Louis XIII. and the Cardinal. The republicans had taken this cannon from Richelieu, to employ it against the brigands, by whom it was captured in the first engagement at Chollet. This cannon had received, for I know not what reason, the name of Marie-Jeanne; was supposed to possess some miraculous power, and looked upon as a sure pledge of victory. I found it adorned with flowers and ribands. The peasants embraced it, and requested me to do so likewise, with which I complied most willingly.

There were thirteen other pieces of different calibres. In the evening I was both surprised and edified to see all the soldiers who lodged in the same house with us, kneel, and repeat a prayer, which one of them read aloud. I understood they never failed to perform this devotion three times a-day.

Their bravery and enthusiasm had not destroyed their natural mildness; and their love and respect for religion, though not much enlightened, promoted this disposition. In the first months of the war, before the atrocities of the republicans had excited the desire of revenge, or suggested the necessity of reprisals, the Vendéen army was as distinguished for its virtues, as admirable for its valour. And even after the cruelties of the republicans, similar excesses did not often stain the victories of the royalists. Though they took towns by storm, they neither pillaged nor maltreated the vanquished, nor did they exact either ransoms or contributions; the inhabitants of the country, at least, were never guilty of these excesses.

Some young *Breton* deserters, who had passed the Loire, to evade the recruiting, and, therefore, could not draw their subsistence from their homes, were not always as irreproachable, but they were severely punished. In the divisions of Bas-Poitou, and the county of Nantes, things were not thus managed, and some disorders were committed.

During the day I passed at Bressuire, I could observe these characteristic features in the Vendéen soldiers. They detested the town, from the massacres that had been committed in it by the troops; yet never thought of doing the least injury to an inhabitant, only demolishing the external walls of the town. In the house where we were lodged, and in the very apartment I was in, there were many soldiers. I heard them lamenting the want of tobacco; and asked whether there was none in the town. They replied, "There is plenty to be sold, but we have no money." I sent, and supplied them. Two dragoons quarrelled in the

street, under our windows. One of them drew his sabre, and wounded the other slightly; the latter was going to return the stroke, when my father stopped his arm, saying, "Jesus Christ pardoned his murderers; shall a soldier of the Catholic army take away the life of his comrade?" They instantly desisted, and embraced each other! I never heard of any duels in our army. No one ever thought of displaying his courage, but against the enemy.

The army which occupied Bressuire was composed of parishes bordering on Anjou, which, joined to those which M. de Lescure had raised, formed the *Grand Army*. Generally it had about 20,000 men; but on important occasions it could easily be doubled. This army had most enemies to encounter, and met with the greatest successes. It acted generally in concert with the division of M. de Bonchamp, which might be considered as forming a part of it. This division belonged to the parishes that border on the Loire, near Saint Florent. The *Bretons*, who crossed the river, joined it. It consisted of 10,000 or 12,000 men. They were mostly opposed to the republicans who occupied Angers.

M. de Charrette commanded in the marsh along the coast. He had 20,000 men at most, and had to oppose the garrisons of Nantes and Sables. In the same districts there were three or four small bodies commanded by MM. de la Cathelinière, Jolly and Savin, acting often in concert with M. de Charrette. M. de Royrand occupied Montaigu, and the adjacent districts. His division consisted of 12,000 men, opposed to the troops stationed at Luçon Between Nantes and Montaigu, MM. de

Lyrot and d'Isigny had three or four thousand men, and had to defend the country on the side of Nantes.

The grand army was supported by these divisions behind, but it had to defend a very extensive line, and was unprotected to the north and to the south. The republicans could attack it from Fontenay, Parthenay, Airvault, Thouars, Vihiers, Doué, and Brissac; and it successively carried and occupied these towns.

No general had yet been appointed. The soldiers followed the chiefs in whom they had confidence, and these managed very well among themselves, without any reference to military rank.

M. de Bonchamp, chief of the army of Anjou, was thirty-two years of age, and had served with distinction in India, under M. de Suffrein. His valour and talents were unquestioned; he was considered as one of the most able of the chiefs; and his troops as the best disciplined. He had no ambition, no pretensions, was gentle, of an easy temper, much loved by the army, and possessing its confidence. But he had the misfortune of being wounded in most of the engagements, and the army was often deprived of his presence. Owing to this circumstance, I never happened to see him.

There were excellent officers in his division; the two de Fleurions, who were old military men, and supplied his place when absent; MM. Soyer, Martin, and M. de Scepaux, brother-in-law to M. de Bonchamp, &c. all brave and devoted to the cause.

In the grand army, the principal chief at this time was M. d'Elbée, who commanded particularly the people around Chollet and Beaupréau. He had

been a sub-lieutenant, and retired for some years; was forty, of a small stature, extremely devout, enthusiastic, and possessed an extraordinary and calm courage. His vanity, however, was easily wounded, which made him irritable, although ceremoniously polite. He had some ambition, but narrow, as well as all his views. His tactics consisted in rushing on with these words, "My friends, Providence will give us the victory!" His piety was very sincere; but as he saw it was a means of attaching and animating the peasants, he carried it to a degree of affectation and charlatanry, often ridiculous. He had about his person images of saints, read sermons and exhortations to the soldiers, and, above all, spoke incessantly of *Providence*, and to such a degree, that the peasants, much as they loved him, and respected everything connected with religion, called him, without meaning a joke, "*General Providence*." In spite of these little foibles, M. d'Elbée was in reality so estimable and virtuous a man, that he inspired every one with respect and attachment.

Stofflet was at the head of the parishes on the side of Maulevrier. He was from Alsace, and had served in a Swiss regiment. Since the revolt began, he had been garde-chasse of the chateau Maulevrier. He was a large and muscular man, forty years of age. The soldiers did not like him, as he was harsh, and absolutely brutal; but they obeyed him better than any other officer, which rendered him extremely useful. He was active, intelligent, and brave, and the generals had great confidence in him. Since that period he has discovered a foolish and unbounded ambition, which injured himself and the

army; but at that time, as at all others, he was devoted to the cause without thinking of himself.

Cathelineau, aged thirty-four, commanded the people of Pin, in Mauge, and its environs. He was, as I said before, a simple peasant, who had for some time been a pedlar in the woollen trade. Never was there a more gentle, modest, or virtuous man—perfectly unassuming, and commanding the more respect on that account. He possessed a very superior understanding, a powerful eloquence, and natural talents for war. The peasants adored him, and felt towards him the most profound respect.

His reputation for piety was such, that the soldiers called him "*The Saint of Anjou;*" and placed themselves, when they could, near him in battle, imagining that they could not be wounded at the side of so holy a man.

When M. de Lescure was with the army, he was also called "*The Saint of Poitou;*" and they felt for him, as for Cathelineau, a sort of religious veneration.

M. de la Rochejaquelein was chief of the parishes around Châtillon. His courage was ardent and rash, which acquired him the title of "*The Intrepid.*" In battle he had a just and quick eye; his measures were prompt and able, and he always inspired the soldiers with ardour and confidence; but he was blamed for exposing himself to danger without necessity; going too far; often engaging in personal combat with the enemy, and pursuing him, when defeated, without any regard to his own safety. He was thought to attend too little to the discussions of the council of war. In reality, he found them often idle and useless, and was apt to fall

asleep after having delivered his opinion. To these charges he only answered, "Why was I made a general? My only wish is to be a hussar, that I may have the pleasure of fighting!"

Notwithstanding this natural taste for fighting, he was full of gentleness and humanity; and, the battle over, felt nothing but pity for the vanquished. In taking a prisoner, he sometimes offered to fight him singly.

The bravery of M. de Lescure did not resemble his cousin's, for it never betrayed him out of his habitual coolness; and even when he showed temerity, he never ceased to be calm and collected. He was the best informed officer in the army: for, having always had a taste for military studies, he had pursued them with zeal. He was familiar with all the publications on tactics; and he alone understood something of fortification. When the entrenchments of the republicans were to be attacked, his advice was always deemed necessary. Although so much loved and respected, he was thought tenacious of his opinions. But in his humanity, there was something angelic and wonderful! In a war in which the generals were soldiers, and fought frequently man to man, no one ever received death from the hand of M. de Lescure. Never did he allow, when in his power to prevent it, a prisoner to perish or be ill treated—even when the horrible massacres of the republicans tempted the mildest of our officers to retaliate. A man once fired close to his breast. Putting aside the gun, he said, "Take away this prisoner;" but the enraged peasants killed him instantly. He had never been seen so angry on any occasion, nor had an oath ever escaped from him be-

fore. The number of lives he saved was astonishing; and his memory is cherished and venerated by all parties throughout La Vendée. Of all those who distinguished themselves in this war, none acquired a purer glory.

MM. de la Rochejaquelein and de Lescure were united as brothers. Their names were always mentioned together; and their friendship was celebrated through the whole army. With different characters, they had the same simplicity, the same gentleness, the same absence of ambition or vanity. Henri said, "If we re-establish the King upon the throne, he will grant me a regiment of hussars." The wishes of M. de Lescure were not less modest.

My father had not at first any particular command, although he was a *Maréchal-de-Camp*, and had seen service in Germany. A stranger to the country, he did not desire to be a general in chief, but only to do his duty in the army. He was much respected in the council, but meddled little; and he anticipated the deplorable issue of the war. He cared so little about making himself of consequence, that when he arrived at Bressuire, and M. d'Elbée said to him, with an *air of protection*, that he would take care the King should know of those who deserved reward; and that he possessed powerful interest by means of a relation of his who was Master of the horse to the Prince of Condé; my father did not even let him know that he had passed all his life at Court, and never thought of turning into ridicule the offers of M. d'Elbée; simply answering, that he wished nothing but the honour of serving the King.

M. de Marigny was appointed general of the artillery, and understood perfectly this branch of the

military art. During the war with England, he had been engaged in many disembarkations, and had more experience than most of the officers; but, with great bravery, his heat and rashness made him often lose his judgement, and injure the cause, to which, however, his talents had been still more frequently useful. To this impetuosity, also, must be attributed his severity and inhumanity towards the vanquished. He scarcely ever spared them, and was deaf to our expostulations, thinking it was useful to the party. To this idea, firmly established in his mind, the cruelties of a man hitherto so good-natured, must be attributed. He always was kind to our soldiers.

M. Dommaigné was general of the cavalry, and was a brave and worthy man.

M. de Boisy was always considered as one of our generals, though prevented by bad health from being very useful. M. Duhoux d'Hautrive, brother-in-law to M. d'Elbée, and Chevalier de St Louis, also a good officer, was not frequently with the army. Many officers, even among those who showed some talents, had no distinct place in the army; but fought where they happened to be wanted, and did whatever they were ordered. The principal of these were, MM. Forestier, Tonnelay, Forêt, Villeneuve du Cazeau, the brothers of Cathelineau, le Chevalier Duhoux, le Chevalier Desessarts, MM. Guignard, Odaly, the brothers Cadi, Bourasseau, &c.

Some of them were gentlemen; others only citizens or peasants. To these officers many others were often joined. All who had formerly served in the army; every gentleman or well informed man; every one in whom the peasants showed con-

fidence; every soldier who discovered bravery or intelligence; were officers by right. The generals gave them a commission, and they did their best. A body of officers, thus composed, were not likely to act well together; and the service might be supposed to have been a scene of dissensions and misunderstandings; but the absence of all precise rules arose from their being superfluous, or even hurtful. There existed a mutual and perfect confidence among them; they had the same object in view, the same devotedness; each individual performed the utmost in his power, without any need of his duty being strictly prescribed to him. Vanity and ambition were scarcely distinguishable; and as there were engagements with the enemy almost every day, very little time remained for disputes and the display of pretensions. If ambitious hopes were formed, they were so remote that it would have been ridiculous to speak of them. The differences of personal rank and birth were forgotten. A brave peasant, the tradesman of a small town, were brothers in arms to a gentleman. They encountered the same dangers, led the same life, were almost dressed in the same manner, and conversed on the same topics common to all:—this equality was real, and perfectly free from affectation.

There were originally different shades of opinion among the officers respecting the Revolution; and they had not all begun at the same period to detest it; but being now all agreed on the same point, and having all shown the same zeal, the mere date of their opinions could not be an object of invidious distinction among them.

Such was, with a few exceptions, the character of the chiefs and officers in the beginning of the

war. The formation and discipline of the army presented a state of things no less peculiar. The army was never assembled for more than three or four days together. Whether the battle was gained or lost, the object effected or not, nothing could prevent the peasants returning to their homes; and the chiefs were left with some hundreds of deserters, or strangers, without a home to go to: But, whenever the army was wanted for some new enterprise, it was as readily formed again as it had been dissolved. The chiefs sent to all the parishes; and the tocsin being sounded, and the peasants assembled, a requisition, in the following terms, was read to them:—

"In the holy name of God, and by the King, this parish is invited to send as many men as possible to such a place, on such a day and hour, and to bring provisions with them." The chief, in whose command the parish lay, signed the requisition. It was obeyed with alacrity by the peasants, who even struggled for the privilege of going. Each man brought bread with him, and the generals provided a certain quantity of provisions besides. The grain and oxen necessary for the support of the army were obtained from the gentlemen's estates, or proprietors of land in general, emigrants and others; but there was seldom occasion to have recourse to a requisition—for there was extreme willingness to furnish what was necessary. The rich people gave with the utmost liberality, and the parishes assessed themselves to send carts with bread to the army as it passed: and the women on their knees, telling their beads, watched upon the roads to offer provisions to the soldiers. Those who were able, gave to the full extent of their

means, and there was no instance of want of provisions.

As the army at that time had neither waggons nor baggage, it may well be supposed there could be no tents; but the sick and wounded met with particular care and attention. They were all, whether royalists or republicans, transported to St Laurent sur Sèvre, where they were attended by the sisters of *La Sagesse*, a species of *sœurs grises*,* who had taken refuge there in great numbers, persecuted as they were everywhere else, and driven away from their other houses. In the same town the missionaries of St Esprit had dedicated themselves to the same functions; some following the army as surgeons, and others superintending small hospitals in different places.

When the army was assembled, it was divided into different columns, for the attack of certain points previously determined upon by the generals. They said, "M—— goes such a way, who follows him?" Those soldiers who knew the officer, joined immediately; and when the requisite number was made up, no more men were received. The chiefs, when they arrived at the point of attack, formed the different companies in the same manner. The soldiers were not told, "To the right;" "To the left;" but, "Go towards that house,—towards that great tree,—then to the attack!" The peasants scarcely ever omitted saying their prayers before engaging, and almost all of them made the sign of the cross, each time they fired.

* An order of nuns, whose vows were to attend the sick.

It was found impossible, even for money, to make them stand sentinel, or make a patrol. The officers were obliged to perform this duty, when necessary. They had some colours which they displayed on important occasions; but when the victory was gained, the peasants huddled together colours and drums into a cart, and returned in a joyous crowd. As soon as the battle began, and the musketry and artillery were heard, the women and children, and all the inhabitants not engaged, repaired to the churches, or prostrated themselves in the fields, to pray for the success of our arms. And thus, through a whole country, and at *one moment*, there was but one thought, one prayer! The fate of all hung upon the same battle.

Such was the Vendéen army, the first months of the war; and when it is considered how little common prudence, order, or calculation, contributed to its successes, they will appear still more surprising. Very different ideas had been formed of this insurrection. It was naturally supposed to have been brought about by intrigue and deep manœuvring, and that the chiefs were skilful politicians, of whom the peasants were the blind instruments, and that the whole had been the result of a great plan previously concerted. Nothing could be more remote from the truth. The war was rather defensive than offensive, wholly without a plan, and had scarcely any object but the immediate security of the country. After continued successes, the hope of powerfully contributing to a counter revolution, assuredly presented itself to all the Vendéens, but without influencing their conduct. During those short moments, in

which they could indulge such hopes, the pretensions of the insurgents did not cease to be moderate. I know not what dreams of ambition may have been formed afterwards by some of the chiefs; but the views of the army, of the good peasants and their officers, were extremely humble.

1*st*, They meant to ask that the name of La Vendée, given by chance, should be preserved, and a province formed of the Bocage, with a distinct administration.

It had long been a source of regret, that a country united by manners, industry, and the nature of the soil, should be separated in three parts, each dependent on different provinces, whose administrations had always neglected the Bocage.

2*dly*, They would have solicited the King to honour for once that rude and remote country with his presence.

3*dly*, They wished that, in memory of the war, the white flag might always be seen on the steeple of each parish; and that a corps of Vendéens should be admitted in the King's guard.

On other points, the peasants neither wished for diminution of taxes, exemptions from the militia, nor particular privileges; and would even have objected to the execution of former projects, for opening roads, or navigation of rivers.

This account of our hopes and wishes will give an idea of the peculiar character of the Vendéen war; differing, by its simplicity, purity and zeal, from most other insurrections.

We set out from Bressuire, on the 4th of May, in the morning. At a quarter of a mile from Châtillon, we saw a great number of the townspeople,

who came armed to meet us, calling out, "Vive le Roi! La noblesse!* The priests!" They asked where M. de Lescure was; and when they were told he was with the army, their transports redoubled. At Châtillon, a counsel, just appointed, made a speech, and would give us a guard of honour. We continued our route, and in a little while took leave of our guard, giving them thirty louis. In the evening we arrived at the chateau de la Boulaye, where my mother, my aunt, M. d'Auzon, M. Desessarts, his daughter, and myself, established ourselves.

CHAPTER VII.

THOUARS, PARTHENAY, AND CHATAIGNERAIE TAKEN.—DEFEAT AT FONTENAY.—FONTENAY TAKEN.

As I was not at the scene of action, and as the engagements were very numerous, I cannot give a detail of each, and must even omit many of them.

The taking of Thouars was one of the principal events of the war, and peculiarly important to me. It was the first time M. de Lescure appeared in battle; and he gained so high a reputation for valour, as instantly acquired him a great influence in the army.

* *La noblesse* does not mean nobility, but more properly the gentry.

General Quétineau entered Thouars the 3d of May; and not imagining he should be attacked, took no precautions. In the evening of the 4th, he was informed that the Vendéens were marching to the town, and he then hastened to take measures for its defence. Thouars is situated upon a height, nearly surrounded by the river Thoué; all the roads to it end on this river, except those from Saumur and Poitiers. The Vendéens had, therefore, the Thoué to cross, which runs between deep banks, and is not fordable.

The passage was to be attempted at four points. *At the bridge of St Jean*, which reaches the town, my father and M. de Marigny were charged with this attack. *At the Port du Bac du Château*, MM. d'Elbée, Cathelineau, and Stofflet. *At a bridge which was half a mile from the town, near the village of Vrine*, MM. de la Rochejaquelein and de Lescure. And at *Ford aux Riches*, further from Thouars, M. de Bonchamp.

General Quétineau had sent troops in haste to defend these points; but his dispositions were defective. It had been resolved that MM. de Lescure, de la Rochejaquelein, and de Bonchamp, were to begin the attack two hours before the others; but some delays took place; and as they did not arrive at the place of action for five hours, the false attack became the principal one. At five in the morning, the column commanded by MM. de Lescure and de la Rochejaquelein, issued from the village of Ligron, which is situated on a height facing the bridge of Vrine. The battalions of the Nièvre and of the Var defended this bridge, and had made a barricade, formed of a cart and some dung; they had also artillery in a good position.

For six hours there was a cannonade, and firing of musketry; but with little effect, from the distance. About eleven o'clock the powder of the Vendéens beginning to fail, M. de la Rochejaquélein went for a supply, leaving M. de Lescure alone to command. A moment after, my husband perceived the republicans less steady, and as if beginning to give way; he instantly seized a musket with a bayonet, and calling to the soldiers to follow him, descended rapidly from the height, and gained the middle of the bridge, amidst showers of balls and case shot! No peasant dared to follow him! He returned, called, exhorted—and again giving the example, returned upon the bridge, but remained alone! His clothes pierced with balls, he made a third effort. At that instant MM. de la Rochejaquelein and Forêt arrived, and flew to his assistance; he had been followed by one only of the peasants. All four crossed the bridge. M. de Lescure leaped the entrenchment; the peasant was wounded; but Henri and Forêt got over it also; the men then rushed on to their assistance, and the passage was forced.

A moment after, M. de Bonchamp succeeded in passing the *Gué-aux-Riches*, which was defended by the national guard of Airvaux. These brave men, ignorant that they were cut off by the bridge of Vrine, refused to surrender—and perished, fighting with great bravery.

This action has been attributed to the men called Marseillais; but they were incapable of it, having shown themselves through the whole war as destitute of courage as of humanity.

As soon as the republicans opposed to M. de Lescure saw the bridge carried, they fled in disor-

der towards the town. Thirty dragoons pursued them to the walls of the town, but returned afterwards to take post before the bridge, and protect the passage of the whole army. When it had filed off, this advanced post fell back into the rear. The republicans, mistaking this for a flight, advanced upon the Vendéens, who allowed them to approach, and then, with a warm discharge of musketry and artillery, routed them a second time. They retired with precipitation into the town. The Vendéens followed them closely, but finding the gates shut, they determined upon an assault. The town was surrounded by an old wall, without any ditch. The peasants tried to demolish it with their pikes; but this was not speedy enough. M. de la Rochejaquelein, mounted on the shoulders of Texier, a peasant of the parish of Courlay, reached the top of the wall, where it was a little broken. He then fired some shot, and with his hands began pulling down the stones, making at last a kind of breach, by which the troops rushed in. During this time, the two other divisions had crossed the river and begun their attack. General Quétineau, seeing he could no longer defend the town, yet fearing to commit himself by capitulating, proposed to the administrators of the district to hoist the white flag, and send a deputation with offers of submission. They hesitated a long time, for they were decided republicans, and feared the brigands; but on Quétineau demonstrating to them that resistance was no longer practicable, they consented, and went to M. d'Elbée to make their submission, at the very moment that MM. de la Rochejaquelein and de Lescure were entering the town. Notwithstanding this circumstance, there was no dis-

order, no inhabitant was ill treated, nor a house pillaged. The peasants hurried to the churches, to ring the bells and pray. They burnt the tree of liberty, and the papers belonging to the administration—which, for what reason I know not, always afforded them great amusement. After that, they went and lodged in private houses, behaving quietly and gently, exacting nothing but wine and provisions.

The public functionaries of Thouars were at first in great apprehension of being ill treated by the peasants; and putting themselves under the protection of the chiefs, never quitted them. MM. de Lescure and de la Rochejaquelein undertook to shelter them. On entering the town, the skirts of their coats had been laid hold of by two or three of these men as a safeguard. There was, however, no favour granted to the priests who had taken the oaths. They were imprisoned, and led away when our troops left the town, as also 300 prisoners taken before the capitulation; but there was no injury done to them.

All the chiefs lodged in the same house with General Quétineau. M. de Lescure, who had known him a grenadier, and looked upon him as a man of honour, took him to his own apartment, where Quétineau said, "Sir, I perceived your window-shutters closed when I left Bressuire. You believed yourselves forgotten—but it was not from defect of memory that I left you at liberty." M. de Lescure expressed his gratitude, and added, "You have your liberty, and may leave us when you please; but I would advise you to remain with us. We differ in opinion—therefore we shall not expect you to fight for us; but you will be a

prisoner on parole, and you shall be well treated. If you return to the republicans, they will never pardon you this capitulation, which was, however, unavoidable. It is an asylum I offer you from their vengeance." Quétineau replied, "I shall be thought a traitor if I go with you; there will then be no doubt that I betrayed the town, although I only advised a capitulation at the moment it was taken by assault. It is in my power to prove that I did my duty; but I should be dishonoured if they could suppose me in intelligence with the enemy." This brave man continued inflexible in his resolution, although others renewed, but in vain, the proposals M. de Lescure had made him. This sincerity and devotion to his principles acquired him the esteem of all our chiefs. He never lowered himself by any supplications, and always preserved a firm and dignified tone. Stofflet, who had not the delicacy of the other gentlemen, was at first rude to General Quétineau, and wished to make him relinquish his cockade. A dispute in consequence was beginning to ensue, when the other chiefs interfered, and obliged Stofflet to desist. The peasants also were far from conceiving why any respect should be shown to a republican general, and astonished to see him lodged in the same house with their generals. The men of M. de Bonchamp's division, learning that he and Quétineau slept in the same room, were in particular much alarmed, and came in crowds to express their fears, and entreat he would not do so. Feeling provoked at this suspicion of Quétineau, he received their remonstrances ungraciously, yet they were repeated several times the same evening;

and at last, seeing that he would pay no attention to them, they introduced themselves into the house after he was gone to bed, and watched the whole night upon the stair and before the door, to guard their general. His garde-chasse, even, when he thought him asleep, opened the door softly, and laid himself down at the foot of his bed. On awaking next morning, M. de Bonchamp scolded these good people for this proof of attachment, which a misconceived distrust had led them to show him.

The Vendéens made some recruits at Thouars. Many soldiers joined us, and some good officers, who have since distinguished themselves. I should mention in particular M. de la Ville de Baugé. He was twenty-seven years of age; had fought against the Vendéens with the national guard of Thouars, but abandoned a party in which he had been enrolled by force, and became, a few months after, one of the principal chiefs among the royalists. He was full of bravery, talents, patience, simplicity, and indefatigable zeal. He employed himself in every way, and always usefully; but he most frequently commanded in the artillery. He acquired the perfect friendship and confidence of MM. de Lescure and de la Rochejaquelein.

MM. Daniaud Dupérat and the Chevalier Piet de Beaurepaire, both eighteen years old, celebrated in the army for their bravery, became two of our best officers. M. Herbold was a student for the priesthood, but had not taken orders, and had been compelled to enter a republican battalion. His virtues, modesty, piety, zeal, and courage, endeared him to all the Vendéens. M. de Beauvolliers, the

elder, brother of the Chevalier, was zealous and active, and was particularly excellent wherever care or method was requisite.

MM. de la Marsonnière and de Sanglier, equally devoted to the cause, were of advanced age. They belonged to the artillery, and the first often performed great services. The Chevalier de Mondyon, who was a boy of fourteen, also joined the army. He had escaped from his boarding-school at Paris, and, with a forged passport, came into Vendée to fight for the King. He was very handsome, had an ardent courage, and great quickness of parts. M. de Langerie was still younger, being only thirteen. He was not allowed, at first, to take an active part in the war, but could not be hindered. In the first engagement he had a horse killed under him. Being then made aide-de-camp to M. ————, who commanded at Châtillon, he deserted a post where he had nothing to do, procured another horse, and rejoined the army. M. Renon was thirty. He came from Loudun before the battle of Thouars, and distinguished himself by the most extraordinary bravery.

After passing two days at Thouars, the chiefs marched to Parthenay. The republicans had evacuated it. The Chevalier de Marsanges, an emigrant, and five dragoons, his comrades, quitted the republicans, and joined us the same day. The generals always saw deserters with pleasure; but the peasants distrusted them, and always imagined these turncoats were spies.

The army then approached Châtaigneraie, defended by three or four thousand republicans. Here all the new comers had their first trials to undergo. M. de Lescure, wishing to put M. de Baugé to the

west, placed him, at the head of two hundred men, in a post of great difficulty. He succeeded in maintaining it with great courage and coolness. The little Chevalier de Mondyon was wounded; as were also the Chevalier de Beauvolliers and M. Dupérat. The six dragoons who had joined at Parthenay, observing the distrust of the Vendéens, and desirous of removing it, fought with desperation. One of them was killed; the peasants, seeing this, called out, "Enough! Dragoons, enough! You are brave men."

La Châtaigneraie was carried, after some resistance. My father's counsels contributed much to this success. The peasants committed some disorders in Châtaigneraie. They had now been many days under arms, and were seized with an extreme desire to return to their homes. It was impossible to restrain them. The next day, the 16th of May, no more than seven thousand remained. Three thousand more were procured, with great difficulty, for the attack of Fontenay.

MM. de Lescure and de la Rochejaquelein commanded the left wing. They obtained at first an advantage, and reached the faubourgs of the town, after having repulsed the republicans; but the right wing and centre had been thrown into complete disorder. The peasants were disheartened,—the dispositions ill made,—and the artillery was crowded together in a road where it could be of no use. M. d'Elbée was wounded in the thigh; M. de la Marsonnière, surrounded, was taken, with more than two hundred men. The day was thought lost; but MM. de Lescure and de la Rochejaquelein, extricating themselves, retreated in good order, saving even their cannon.

After this affair, things were in a very bad situation. Almost all the artillery was lost;* Marie-Jeanne had been taken, and there remained only six pieces of cannon; no more powder; each soldier had at most one cartridge; a general was wounded, and the peasants had lost their first confidence. But the chiefs were not discouraged; they took immediately the measures best suited to the occasion; made light of what had happened; and told the soldiers it would soon be their turn. The assistance of the priests was employed in rekindling the zeal of the people, who were told that God had permitted this misfortune as a punishment for the havock they had committed in some houses of Châtaigneraie.

An unforeseen circumstance, however, contributed more than anything to reanimate the peasants.

Whilst the army was at Thouars, the soldiers found in a house a man in the uniform of a volunteer. He told them he was a priest, who had been forced to enrol in a republican battalion at Poitiers, and requested to speak to M. de Villeneuve du Cazeau, who had been his college companion. M. de Villeneuve recognised him as the Abbé Guyot de Folleville. Soon after, he said that he was Bishop of Agra, and that the nonjuring bishops had consecrated him in secret at St Germain. M. de Villeneuve communicated all this to the Bénédictin M. Pierre Jagault, whose knowledge and judgement were much esteemed. Both proposed to the

* This apparent contradiction is in the text, and not chargeable to the translator.

Bishop of Agra, that he should join the army; but he hesitated much, alleging his bad health. At last they prevailed, and then introduced him to the general officers. No one conceived a doubt of what he told. M. de Villeneuve knew him, and he referred also to M. Brin, curate of Saint Laurent, and the sisters of La Sagesse. He said that the Pope had appointed four apostolic vicars for France, and that the dioceses of the west had been committed to his charge. He had a fine figure, with an air of gentleness and humility, and very good manners. The generals saw, with great pleasure, an ecclesiastic of such high rank and appearance supporting their cause, and an influence likely to prove very powerful. It was agreed upon that he should go to Châtillon, and be received there as bishop.

Thus first appeared in La Vendée that Bishop of Agra, who played so important a part, and became so celebrated in the history of the war. It appeared, in the sequel, that all this singular personage had said of himself was false. He deceived the whole army and country without any apparent object or motive. L'Abbé Guyot de Folleville had at first, as it appears, taken the oath, had left Paris some time before the war in La Vendée, to shelter himself at Poitiers, in the house of a relation. His manners, and his apparent mildness and piety, had made him many friends. All pious persons, and particularly the expelled nuns, had a very great predilection for the Abbé de Folleville. It was then, probably, that in order to give himself still more importance, he confided to these admiring friends that he was Bishop of Agra. An absurd vanity seems to have been his sole motive. It was by

the correspondence of these devotees that the sisters of Saint Laurent had learnt anything; and when he was introduced to the army, the deception, once begun, was carried on without the possibility of detection, or indeed suspicion. This is the only explanation that can be given of the extraordinary conduct of this abbé. He certainly never betrayed us, and perished in our cause; and there was nothing equivocal in his conduct in other respects. This imposture was not suggested to him by ambition and the desire of becoming thè first personage of La Vendée, and acquiring an extensive influence over the minds of the people; for the bishop, with much good-breeding, and the manners of the world, was not a man of ability, and never showed energy or strength of character. Besides, if his tale had been calculated for the civil war, why begin it at Poitiers before the existence of that war, and in a different part of the country? In short, he became a great personage, by inventing an idle story from mere foolish vanity. It has been suspected that the generals were accomplices in this fraud, and had contrived it for the obvious purpose of influence over the peasants. But none of the Vendéen chiefs were capable of using religion as a tool; and, had any one proposed such a project, he would have met with the strongest opposition from all the others. To deceive the army also, would have required a unanimous consent, and impenetrable secrecy in all the principal officers, as at that time there was no general in chief. All they did was to believe, without much reflection, a probable story; and which, once admitted, became useful to the cause.

It was particularly after the defeat at Fontenay

that they reaped great advantage from the presence of this pretended Bishop of Agra. He arrived the very day of the overthrow at Châtillon. On his arrival the bells were rung; crowds followed him, on whom he bestowed benedictions; he officiated pontifically, and the peasants were intoxicated with joy. The happiness of having a bishop among them made them forget their reverses, and restored the whole of their ardour.

The army again assembled, and was joined by the division of M. de Bonchamp, which returned into Anjou after the taking of Châtaigneraie. They again marched upon that town, which the republicans had occupied anew, but evacuated without resistance; and the royalists slept there. The next day, May 24th, towards mid-day, they approached Fontenay, and found 10,000 republicans, with a numerous artillery, waiting for them.

Before the attack, the soldiers received absolution. The generals then said to them, "Now, friends, we have no powder; we must take these cannon with clubs. We must recover Marie-Jeanne! Let us try who runs the best!" The soldiers of M. de Lescure, who commanded the left wing, hesitated to follow him. He advanced alone thirty paces before them, and then stopping, called out, "Vive le Roi!" A battery of six pieces fired upon him with case-shot. His clothes were pierced, his left spur carried away, and his right boot torn; but he was not wounded. "You see, my friends," cried he instantly, "the Blues do not aim well." The peasants took courage, and rushed on. M. de Lescure, to keep up with them, was obliged to put his horse to the full trot. At that moment, perceiving a large crucifix, they threw themselves on

their knees before it. M. de Baugé wanted to urge them on. "Let them pray," said M. de Lescure calmly. They soon rose, and again rushed on. Meantime, M. de la Rochejaquelein, at the head of the cavalry, with M. de Dommaigné, charged successfully. The republican horse fled; but, instead of pursuing them, they turned upon the flank of the left wing, and broke through it. This decided the victory. The republicans had held out about an hour. A battalion of the Gironde alone stood nobly; the rest fled in disorder towards the town. M. de Lescure was the first to reach the gate of the town with his left wing, and entered it; but his peasants had not courage to follow him. MM. de Bonchamp and Forêt perceived from a distance the danger he run, and darted forward to his assistance. These three had the temerity to penetrate alone into the streets. They were full of Blues, who fled in disorder, or fell upon their knees, calling for "Mercy!" These gentlemen said to them, "Ground your arms, and no harm shall be done to you. Vive le Roi!" When they came to the public square, they separated, and each took a different street. Scarcely had M. de Bonchamp parted from M. de Lescure, than a Blue, who had thrown down his gun, took it up again, and fired at him. The ball pierced his arm, and the flesh near his breast. His peasants, who followed at some distance, rushed forward furiously, and massacred all the Blues found in that street, lest the criminal should escape.

M. de Lescure turning into the street of the Prisons, had them opened in the name of the King; M. de la Marsonnière, and all the Vendéens, came out instantly, and embraced him as their deliverer!

They had been condemned the evening before, and were to have been executed that day. Expecting every moment during the battle to be put to the sword, they had endeavoured to raise a barricade to defend themselves.

The same apprehension for their safety had induced M. de Lescure thus to venture into the town, and hasten to the prisons; but he now left them immediately to pursue the enemy.

Forêt had followed the main street, and after traversing the town, he found himself on the road to Niort. He was bent on retaking Marie-Jeanne, to the preservation of which the Blues attached so much importance. Within a mile of the town, Forêt overtook the piece, guarded by some foot soldiers, with some gendarmes, at a little distance; and Forêt had advanced so imprudently, that he found himself suddenly in the midst of them.

Fortunately, he was mounted on a horse taken some days before from a gendarme, and had preserved the saddle and accoutrements. They, therefore, took him for one of themselves, and said to him, "Comrade, there are 25,000 francs for those who shall save Marie-Jeanne. It is attacked, let us go back and defend her." Forêt agreed, and said he would be the first. When near the piece, he turned suddenly upon the gendarmes, and killed two of them. The peasants, who saw this, redoubled their efforts; and Marie-Jeanne was retaken, and carried off triumphantly, although with the loss of some lives.

The battle of Fontenay, the most brilliant the Vendéens had yet fought, procured them forty pieces of cannon, many muskets, a great quantity of powder, and ammunition of all kinds. They took

also two boxes filled with assignats, which had not the impression of the King upon them. The first was pillaged by the soldiers, who thought so little of this species of money, that they burnt and tore the assignats, and many curled their hair with them in derision. The second box, which contained nearly 900,000 francs, was preserved by the generals for the use of the army. They endorsed the assignats, "*Bon, au nom du Roi*," with the signature of all the members of the superior council then formed. This measure inspired much confidence.

There was considerable embarrassment respecting the republican prisoners, whose number amounted to three or four thousand. The custom of giving no quarter was not then fully adopted by the Blues, and, therefore, retaliation was not yet become necessary. These people, besides, had been told, "Surrender, and no harm shall be done to you." To guard them was impossible, as we had neither forts, nor any other place of safety; their parole, not to serve against us, or any of the coalesced powers, would have been of no avail. My father proposed to cut off their hair, which would secure their being known again, and punished if taken a second time: the measure was adopted, and occasioned much mirth among our people.

Great advantages were expected from this, as it would serve to establish throughout all France, both the successes and moderation of the Vendéens; and as they would be obliged to acknowledge, and tell, that the rebels, instead of being brigands, as they were called, were, in fact, full of loyalty, courage, and clemency. The Vendéens conducted themselves also with prudence and moderation towards the purchasers of forfeited estates; whose

titles were declared null, but their persons not molested. Many of them had already joined us. The Chevalier Desessarts drew up a proclamation, which was printed and signed by the council of war; many thousand copies were distributed among the dismissed prisoners.

These measures had not the expected effects. The revolutionary opinions were stronger, and more extensively diffused than we were aware of, and there were no means of such an understanding with the other provinces, as to induce them to throw off the yoke. That perfect unison of sentiments between the peasants and the higher classes, did not exist elsewhere; and the revolt made no progress.

The insurrections at Lyons, and in the south, were unconnected with ours, and undertaken in a different spirit.

CHAPTER VIII.

FORMATION OF THE SUPERIOR COUNCIL—VICTORIES OF VIHIERS, OF DOUE, OF MONTREUIL—TAKING OF SAUMUR.

After the taking of Fontenay, some proposed to march upon Sables, others on Niort; and this last was, I believe, preferable to the other, which would have led too far from the insurgent country. Both were liable to many objections. During these debates, the morning slipt away; and the peasants, who were fatigued, and had received no orders, be-

gan to withdraw to their villages, where they had an extreme desire to carry the news of their victory of Fontenay. It became impossible to undertake anything new.

Meanwhile, such a victory, and the taking the chief town of a department, seemed to give to the Vendéen insurrection much more importance than it ever had before.

The chiefs having no military occupation at that moment, wished now to establish some regularity in their operations. They created a superior council, to sit at Châtillon. The Bishop of Agra was president, and M. Desessarts' father vice-president. Carrière, *avocat* of Fontenay, who had joined the royalists, was chosen Procureur du Roi in the council; and M. Pierre Jagault, a benedictine, secretary. Among the members of the council, should be distinguished M. de la Rochefoucauld, who was the doyen (senior member); MM. le Maignan, Bourasseau de la Renolière, and Body. The other members were, except two ecclesiastics, lawyers and gentlemen, whose age or health prevented their bearing arms. One of those who distinguished himself the most in the council, and who acquired most influence in the army, was the Abbé Bernier, curate of the parish of St Laud à Angers. Of all those engaged in the civil war, none had superior abilities to the Abbé Bernier. He had the most admirable facility in speaking or writing, and preached extempore. I have heard him speak for two hours at a time, with a force and brilliancy that captivated his hearers. What he said was always well-timed; his texts were peculiarly well chosen, and happily interwoven with his subject. He never hesitated; and though his eloquence was remote from fiery

vehemence, it seemed inspired. His exterior and manners corresponded with his words; the sound of his voice was soft and penetrating; and his action was remarkably simple. His unwearied zeal never abated; he never lost courage; and his apparent modesty added more value to his great qualities. He often gave excellent advice to the generals, and entered into the military spirit without derogating from his ecclesiastical character. He ruled in the superior council, and he was loved by the soldiers for his preaching and ardour for religion. Thus in a little time the Abbé Bernier acquired a universal ascendancy. But by degrees the general opinion began to alter; an ambitious aim was discovered in all his conduct. Extremely tenacious of power, he continually grasped at more; he sowed discord everywhere; flattered some at the expense of others, in order to please and govern more securely. In consequence, the esteem and respect that had been conceived for him gradually disappeared; and after the war, the Vendéens imputed to him, justly or not, bad morals, a mean, interested disposition, unbounded ambition, even crimes, and with some probability. But the prejudice in his favour was not soon dissipated; and his talents and capacity never ceased to command respect and a kind of awe, felt even by those who liked him the least.

Among the ecclesiastics of the superior council, M. Pierre Jagault was also very distinguished by his talents. He had neither ambition nor vanity. He gave wise counsels without seeking, as the Abbé Bernier did, to govern the army. He equalled him in his facility of speaking and writing; but though endowed with all the talents requisite, he seldom

preached. M. Brin, curate of Saint Laurent, was also very considerable by his zeal and eminent virtues.

The generals referred to the superior council all that related to the administration of the country; and in each parish a council was formed to superintend the execution of the orders issued by the superior council. It was established also, that in the parishes where there was no military chief, the peasants should name one among them who was to attend to the levies of men, correspond with the generals, command the men, and distribute the provisions. Measures were taken to provide clothing and shoes for those who were in need; magazines were formed, and various other useful arrangements. It was necessary to appoint a treasurer of the army, acting in concert with the superior council. M. de Beauvolliers, the elder, could not refuse an office for which he was better fitted than any other person, although it occasioned him, to his extreme regret, to be almost always absent from the engagements; but he preserved his place in the council of war. As he was the only chief who had a fixed residence, all demands were carried to him. He had a number of people employed under him; some charged with the distribution of stores, and others whose department was to ascertain the wants of the army and provide for them. These establishments were at Châtillon, the head quarters.

The generals were occupied, during the three days they passed in Fontenay after the battle, in regulating these affairs. The town was without defence, and situated in the plain, where opinions were in general favourable to the revolution; yet they left Fontenay without committing an injury.

and even released three administrators of the department, whom they had arrested.

Scarcely had the army returned into the Bocage, when they learnt that the republican hussars had shown themselves at Argenton-le-Chateau. MM. de Lescure and de la Rochejaquelein received this intelligence at the Chateau of La Boulaye. They immediately sent expresses to summon the army to assemble at Aubiers. On arriving there, they found the hussars had returned to Vihiers, being part of the advanced guard of a numerous republican army forming at Saumur.

The Convention had begun to consider the insurrection of La Vendée as formidable, and now wished to send a great force against the rebels. Some battalions had been raised at Paris, in which soldiers drawn from the army of the north were incorporated. A numerous and warlike cavalry was also sent. All these measures were taken with inconceivable rapidity. The troops and cannon travelling post and in boats, came in five days from Paris to Saumur. Forty thousand men, of which the half were troops of the line, occupied already Saumur, Montreuil, Thouars, Doué, and Vihiers.

Stofflet was the first who attacked them. He left Chollet with seventy horse, and entered Vihiers without resistance. The republican cavalry fell back. He instantly wrote to MM. de Lescure and de la Rochejaquelein, that he waited for them; and those gentlemen began their march in perfect security. Meanwhile the Blues returned, and attacked Stofflet with 2000 men, obliging him to withdraw so precipitately, that he had not time to send notice to MM. de Lescure and de la Rochejaquelein. The republicans, learning that a Vendéen column

was advancing, warned the inhabitants, who were patriots, to let the rebels believe that the town was still occupied by their own party, while they lay in ambush on a neighbouring height. MM. de Lescure and de la Rochejaquelein, and Desessarts, with about 4000 men, entered the town without suspicion. After having traversed it, they perceived, upon the height, men posted behind bushes; and, believing them the troops of Stofflet, advanced to join them. The peasants followed negligently, when suddenly a masked battery opened upon them with case-shot. M. de Lescure's horse was wounded; the branches of the trees all around were shattered; but he and two other chiefs beside him escaped unhurt. The peasants rushed undauntedly upon the Blues, who, surprised by this attack, when they expected a flight, abandoned their cannon, and fled in disorder towards the town.

The grand army, and all the chiefs except MM. de Bonchamp and d'Elbée, who were not yet cured of their wounds, collected immediately at Aubiers, and marched to Doué, which they carried. The peasants eagerly pursued the republicans on the road to Saumur, to within reach of the town, where the fire of two redoubts, placed on the height of Bournan, forced them to return to Doué.

During the action of this day, two hussars quitted the enemy's ranks, and joined us. One of these was M. de Boispreau, who has since distinguished himself.

An attack on Saumur was now determined upon. My father and M. de Beauvolliers, judging that there would be a difficulty in following the direct road going by Montreuil-Bellay, advised cutting off the communication of Thouars with Saumur, and

making an attack upon that side, which was certainly the weakest. This advice was adopted, and Montreuil was occupied by our troops. It was expected that the troops at Thouars would bring succours from Saumur; and towards eight o'clock 5000 or 6000 men, commanded by General Salomon, appeared at the gate of Montreuil, not suspecting the royalists had taken it. My father had placed a battery behind the gate; and, unmasking it suddenly, the Blues received a murderous discharge: at the same moment the division of Bonchamp made an attack on their flank, which soon terminated in a complete and bloody defeat. The Blues fled along the road to Thouars, leaving their cannon and baggage, and were so terrified that they did not even stop there. We also suffered a great loss; as, from the darkness of the night, some of the troops fired upon Bonchamp's division, when it was attacking the enemy's flank.

After the battle, M. de la Rochejaquelein proposed sending a detachment of cavalry to annoy and keep the republicans on the watch during the night, in order that fatigue might render them less able to resist an attack in the course of the next day. This was resolved on, and he undertook the execution of it; but the peasants, elated by their successes, followed in crowds the small number of men he wished to take with him: and, in a short time, the whole troops were upon the road to Saumur, shouting, "Vive le Roi! We go to Saumur!" The chiefs, unable to check this impulse, hastened to place themselves at their head, and determined on a real attack.

M. de Lescure, who commanded the left wing, undertook to turn the redoubts at the junction of

the roads leading from Montreuil and Doué. M. de la Rochejaquelein followed the river along the meadows; MM. de Fleuriot, Stofflet, and Desessarts, at the head of Bonchamp's division, passed by the heights above Thoué, towards the castle of Saumur.

These three assaults began nearly at the same time, on the morning of the 10th of June. The point at which M. de Lescure commanded, presented the greatest difficulties. The manner in which the troops had engaged, against the intentions of the generals, increased the usual irregularity of their operations. Nevertheless, the redoubts were turned, and the bridge passed; when suddenly a ball having wounded M. de Lescure in the arm, the peasants, who saw him covered with blood, began to slacken their pace. Happily the bone was not touched; and M. de Lescure, binding up the wound with a handkerchief, called to his men it was of no consequence, and endeavoured to bring them on again; but a charge of republican cuirassiers frightened them; and, when they perceived their balls had no effect, nothing could longer stop them. M. de Dommaigné endeavoured to make a stand at the head of the Vendéen cavalry; but he was struck down by a discharge of case-shot, and his troop overthrown. The route became general, and the flying troops of M. de Lescure took the road from the abbey of Saint Florent, by Thoué. A singular chance redeemed the fortune of the day. Two waggons, overturned on the bridge Fouchard, stopped the cuirassiers, and enabled M. de Lescure to rally the soldiers. The brave Loizeau, of the parish of Trémentine, who had killed three horsemen in defending M. de Dommaigné, and at last was

wounded and struck down, got up, and placing himself at the head of some foot soldiers, fired through the wheels of the waggons at the faces of the cuirassiers and at their horses, while M. de Marigny directed some flying artillery upon them, which turned the scale in favour of the Vendéens.

Leaving M. de Baugé at the head of 700 men to guard the bridge of St Just, M. de la Rochejaquelein attacked the republican camp and turned it; the ditch was crossed, a wall beyond it thrown down, and the post carried. M. de la Rochejaquelein, throwing his hat into the entrenchment, called out, "Who will go and fetch it?" and, darting forward the first himself, he was quickly followed by a great number of brave peasants. The two assaults taking place at the same moment, the Vendéens had again the misfortune of firing upon each other.

M. de la Rochejaquelein, wishing to improve the advantage gained, set off with M. de Baugé in pursuit of the republicans, without considering whether they were followed by their troops. They entered the town at full gallop. A battalion, then coming down from the castle, seeing them, threw down their arms, and regained the castle. These two gentlemen galloped on, the muskets scattered about the street going off under their horses' feet. After passing through the town, they saw the whole army of the Blues flying in disorder across the great bridge of the Loire. Henri began to fire upon the runaways from a convenient situation, whilst M. de Baugé employed himself in loading the pieces for him. They were alone, yet no one thought of turning upon them. A dragoon at last came upon them and fired his pistol, but missed; and Henri

cut him down with his sabre, and took his cartouche-box. The batteries from the chateau also fired upon them; and M. de Baugé received a violent contusion, which struck him down. M. de la Rochejaquelein raised him, and replaced him on his horse. Several pieces of cannon had been abandoned; and two of them, that were loaded, they fired upon the castle. They afterwards crossed the bridge, and, being joined by about sixty foot soldiers, pursued the Blues; but after following for a little while the road to Tours, they returned to see whether the Vendéens had entered the town, as they still heard the cannon of the chateau and the redoubts. They broke down the wooden bridge called *de la Croix Verte*, and placed there two of the cannon taken, to prevent the Blues returning upon them. They soon met M. de Lescure's division in Saumur; and M. de la Rochejaquelein, knowing that the redoubts still held out, went instantly to join M. de Marigny, who had attacked them. His horse was killed under him. Night coming on, the attack was suspended till next day; but the republicans evacuated the place during the night. About 1400 men remaining in the castle, with artillery, M. de Marigny went in with a flag of truce the next day; and a capitulation was concluded, by which the besieged were allowed to retire, abandoning their arms.

The capture of Saumur gave to the Vendéens an important post, the passage of the Loire, eighty pieces of cannon, muskets innumerable, and a great quantity of powder and saltpetre. In the course of five days they had taken 11,000 prisoners; these they shaved, and sent most of them away.

Our loss in this last affair was sixty men killed, and four hundred wounded.

M. de Lescure, knowing that General Quétineau had been found in the castle of Saumur, where he had been imprisoned previous to his trial for the loss of Thouars, sent for him, and said, "Well, Quétineau, you see how the republicans treat you! They accuse you, throw you into prison, and would make you die upon the scaffold. Come and save yourself with us. Notwithstanding our difference of opinion, we esteem, and will do you more justice than your patriots!" "Sir," replied Quétineau, "were I at liberty, I should return to my prison. I performed my duty, and wish to prove it on my trial. Were I to desert, it would be attributed to the consciousness of being a traitor, and I could never support this idea. If I follow you, I must abandon my wife, and she would be made to suffer for me. There, sir, is the memorial of my justification; you know what passed, and will see whether I have stated it correctly." M. de Lescure read the memorial, which contained nothing but the truth. Quétineau added sorrowfully, "The Austrians are masters of Flanders, and you, sir, are also victorious;—a counter-revolution is at hand, and France will be dismembered by foreigners!" "That," said M. de Lescure, "the royalists would never permit; and would fight with equal ardour to defend the French territory." "Ah!" cried Quétineau, "then I should serve along with you! I love glory, and I love my country, and *thus* am I a patriot." At that moment he heard the people of Saumur bawling in the streets, "Vive le Roi!"—and, opening the window, called to them, "Rascals! you, who but

the other day accused me of having betrayed the republic, now, from *cowardice*, cry, 'Vive le Roi!' Ask these Vendéens if I ever did the same." This brave man went to Tours, from whence they carried him to Paris, where he was condemned to death and executed! His wife, for whose sake partly he rejected M. de Lescure's advice, who would not bear to survive him, cried out before the revolutionary tribunal, "Vive le Roi!" and perished also on the scaffold.

M. de Lescure became feverish from fatigue and suffering, having been seven hours on horseback after his wound, and having lost much blood. He was prevailed on to retire to Boulaye, till he should recover. Before setting out, he assembled the officers, and said to them, "Gentlemen, the insurrection has now become so important, and our successes so promising, that we ought to appoint a general in chief; and although, from several officers being absent, the present nomination can only be provisional, I give my vote for Cathélineau."

The choice was universally applauded, except by the good Cathélineau, who was astonished at the honour done him. My father, MM. de Boisy, Duhoux, and d'Elbée, gave afterwards their full approbation. The appointment of Cathélineau was desirable in all respects. Of all the chiefs, he had the most influence over the peasants, who were captivated by a kind of natural eloquence he possessed, and revered him for his piety and virtues. It was he that first raised the country, and gained the first victories. He had a military coup-d'œil, extraordinary courage, and great judgement. It was well known that his new rank would not ren-

der him less modest, nor make him listen with less deference to the opinions of others.

In addition to all these recommendations, it was good policy to have for general-in-chief, a common peasant, at a moment when the spirit of equality, and a keen jealousy of the *noblesse* had become so general. It was, therefore, falling in with the general disposition, and attaching the peasants still more to the party they had embraced. The necessity of attending to this general spirit was so much felt, that the gentlemen took particular care to treat the peasant officers as perfectly their equals, although they themselves did not expect it. I have seen them withdraw from the table of the staff-officers, when I appeared there, saying, "they were not entitled to sit at table with me;" and were only persuaded to remain, in consequence of my entreaties. Equality prevailed much more in the Vendéen than in the republican army; and to such a degree, that I did not know at the time, whether or not the greater part of our officers were gentlemen or peasants.

Merit was the chief consideration. This just and natural sentiment came from the heart; and, although not dictated by interest, was too conformable to it not to be universally adopted. A different conduct might have cooled the general zeal.

I shall mention only one very remarkable example of this equality. M. Forestier, who was the son of a shoemaker in the village of Chaudron, in Anjou, always acted a very conspicuous and distinguished part in our army, with the princes, and in foreign courts, till he died in the year 1808.

Two days after the taking of Saumur, MM. de Beauvolliers, with five or six hundred men, marched to Chinon, which they entered without resistance. They liberated and brought back to Saumur Madame Beauvolliers, whom the patriots had imprisoned. M. de Beauvolliers, the elder, had his daughter also restored to him from Loudun, where M. de la Rochejaquelein went with a party of eighty dragoons. Many officers joined the army while at Saumur. Henri had sent intelligence to M. Charles d'Autichamp, who lived near Angers, who came immediately and entered the division of M. de Bonchamp, his cousin-german, where he was very soon second in command under M. de Fleuriot. M. de Piron, from Brittany, joined the same division, where they served with high reputation.

The grand army likewise acquired at this time M. de la Guérivière, and M. de Bigotie, an emigrant who had returned.

It became necessary to appoint another general of cavalry in the place of M. de Dommaigné. MM. Forêt and Forestier were balloted for; and the latter had the most votes. He was only eighteen, but discovered daily more and more merit; and had the modesty, while he accepted the commission, to decline the title on account of his age.

The commissariat of the Vendéen army acquired more importance, after the taking of Saumur, and possessed infinitely greater resources. MM. de Marigny and Duhoux d'Hautrive established at Mortagne and Beaupréau a powder-mill for manufacturing the saltpetre taken at Saumur; Mortagne was also chosen for the depôt of the artillery; and the magazines of grain, which the republicans

had formed at Chinon, were sent into La Vendée. They also purchased large quantities of salt, oil, and soap; and the medicine chest, which till then had been very ill supplied, was now more amply provided. The want of means had hitherto been supplied by great industry; and many persons had shown much ingenuity and invention.

As to clothes, they had abundance of coarse woollens of the country,—linens, cottons, and tickings. The red handkerchiefs wove in the country became much in request, owing to a particular circumstance. M. de la Rochejaquelein wore generally one of them on his head, one about his neck, and several round his waist, holding his pistols. At the battle of Fontenay, the Blues were heard to cry, "Aim at the red handkerchief." In the evening the other officers entreated Henri to change this costume; but, finding it convenient, he would not consent to relinquish it. They then determined to adopt it themselves, that it might no longer be a mark by which he could be singled out. The red handkerchiefs became thus the fashion in the army. And this, with the vests and pantaloons, gave them certainly a good deal the appearance of brigands, as they were called by the republicans.

CHAPTER IX.

TAKING OF ANGERS—ATTACK OF NANTES—RETREAT FROM PARTHENAY—THE BATTLE OF THE WOOD-DU-MOULIN AUX CHEVRES.

I STILL continued to stay at the castle de la Boulaye with my mother; it seemed as if it were

the head-quarters of the army. The officers came to it during the intervals of the expeditions; some members of the superior council were there constantly.

I had left my child near Clisson with her nurse, who had showed a great unwillingness to leave her family to follow me to La Boulaye. After the defeat of Fontenay, she was concealed at Charry's, or at Texier's, who were the worthiest peasants of the parish of Courtay. I wanted to have her at Boulaye; and I went to meet her as far as la Pommeraye sur Sèvre, where our physician, the good Mr Durand, lived. The roads were impassable in a carriage. I determined, therefore, to ride on horseback; but I was so much afraid, that a man held my horse's bridle the whole way. The next day, while I was at dinner, a messenger arrived, bringing me a letter from M. de Lescure. I had heard of the affair of Saumur, but it had been concealed from me that he had been wounded there. He was just arrived at La Boulaye, and he wrote to me himself, to prevent my being uneasy. I was dreadfully alarmed, and would not lose a moment. Taking a wretched little horse that happened to be in the court-yard, I did not allow time to alter the stirrups, which were uneven, and galloped off. In three quarters of an hour I rode three long leagues of bad roads. I found M. de Lescure out of bed; but he had a violent fever, which lasted several days. Since that time I have never been afraid of riding on horseback.

The great army had never till then had the least connexion with M. de Charrette. M. de Lescure, having some leisure at La Boulaye, wrote him a polite letter, to congratulate him on a very brilliant

affair which had gained him Machecoul. M. de Charrette, in answer, complimented our army on its successes, and particularly on the taking of Saumur. M. de Charrette's letter, as well as that of M. de Lescure, expressed a desire of establishing a communication between the two armies, and of combining their operations. M. de Lescure sent immediately a courier to Saumur, to inform the generals of the steps he had just taken. They were well satisfied, and inclined to take advantage of this disposition, by concerting an attack on Nantes, of which they were then thinking. My father was employed to negotiate this affair. He began by offering cannon and ammunition to M. de Charrette, who accepted them with gratitude. After that, the great army supplied it several times; for in the Bas-Poitou the war was almost always on the defensive; while, on the contrary, our army advancing, took possession of the magazines which the republicans had formed. The attack on Nantes was then concerted with M. de Charrette. He was to act from the left bank.

To remain master of the Loire, it was necessary to keep Saumur, which formed a safe communication between its two banks. It was then resolved to establish a garrison there. M. de Langrénière was to have its command; but not being sufficiently known in the army to inspire the peasants with confidence, M. de la Rochejaquelein was chosen, which did not much please him. To engage the soldiers to remain, they were promised food and fifteen sous a-day; and to be relieved every eight days. Each parish was always to have four men at Saumur. This was the first time pay had been proposed.

The main body of the army set out. It was now very long since the soldiers had left their homes; their ardour was diminished. Stofflet, to determine them to pass the Loire, made a proclamation, without consulting anybody, in which he said, that those who remained were cowards. This measure augmented the army, but diminished very much the garrison of Saumur, which was about a thousand men. M. de la Rochejaquelein returned to command them, after having passed two days at Angers with the army.

The republicans had evacuated Angers, and all the adjacent country. The terror which the Vendéens then inspired was so great, that four young men, Messrs Dupérat, Duchenier, de Boispréau, and Magnan, went alone to La Flêche, ten leagues before the army. They entered the town, crying "Vive le Roi!" alighted at the municipality, announced that the royal army was going straight to Paris, and that they came first with two thousand cavalry, to provide quarters. They said, that, not to frighten the inhabitants, their escort had been left half a league off; they ordered the scarfs of the municipality to be given up, made them trample on the cockade, and burn the tree of liberty. The whole town was in motion to provide food for the expected army. Meantime the gentlemen were quietly eating their dinner at the inn. In the middle of it, a woman servant said to them, "Gentlemen, a pedlar who is just come from Angers says, he did not meet your escort on the road, and they talk of arresting you!" On this, they instantly got to their horses, and arrived full gallop at Angers, dressed up with tri-coloured cockades, and proud of their rashness.

As Angers is the seat of a bishoprick, the Bishop of Agra went there to officiate solemnly. He travelled with the simplicity of an apostle, on horseback, followed by a servant who carried his wooden cross. He celebrated high mass; and to gain the love of the town, and prove that the priests did not preach murder, as the republicans said, it was arranged that the bishop should ask and obtain the pardon of two artillerymen of the Blues, who had been condemned to die for some crimes.

The Prince of Talmont, second son of the Duc de la Trémouille, came to Angers to rejoin the army. He was a young man of five and twenty, five feet ten inches high,* and of a fine figure. Notwithstanding his youth, he was habitually afflicted with the gout, which made him less active. He was brave, faithful, completely devoted to the cause, and of a good temper; but these excellent qualities were a little obscured by a certain air of levity he affected.

The Prince of Talmont was received with the greatest joy—it was flattering to have in the ranks of the army a man of so high a name, and whose family had been so long almost sovereign in Poitou. The Duke de la Trémouille and the Princess of Tarente, his daughter-in-law, who was Mademoiselle de Châtillon, were lords of more than three hundred parishes in that province. M. de Talmont was immediately appointed general of cavalry, to the great satisfaction of the modest M. Forestier. The army took the road from Angers to Nantes; but it was neither very numerous nor very animated. Many of the peasants had returned home.

* Nearly six feet four inches English.

MM. de Lescure and de la Rochejaquelein were absent, as well as many of their officers; and the soldiers who were usually under their command, were either not in the army, or did not preserve their accustomed ardour. Besides, they had always fought against an enemy near their own country, and ready to invade it. And now these poor people could not comprehend of what use it could be to them to go and attack Nantes. In short, General Cathélineau was said not to have eight thousand men when he arrived before the town.

The army of M. de Charrette and the division of M. de Lyrot had, on the contrary, an urgent interest to gain possession of Nantes. It was from thence that all the republican expeditions against Bas-Poitou came, and its inhabitants had mustered to the number of more than twenty-five thousand; but their attack was subordinate to that of the great army, because Nantes is situated almost entirely on the right bank, and there were several arms of the Loire to cross, three of which were fortified.

It was agreed to attack on the 29th of June, at two o'clock in the morning. An accident prevented the perfect execution of this plan. The republican army had left a detachment in the town of Niort. Contrary to all calculation, it defended itself for ten hours together, and they arrived before Nantes only at eight o'clock in the morning. M. de Charrette had begun at the appointed hour; and the republicans, instead of having two attacks at once to repulse, had time to think of their means of defence, and to recover themselves. The generals Canclaux and Beysser, who commanded them, showed a great deal of courage and coolness in sustaining the efforts of the Vendéens. A part of the inhabitants seconded them with zeal; in spite of

which, our army penetrated as far as the suburbs. A fault committed by the Prince of Talmont hindered perhaps the success of the enterprise.

It had always been found best to leave the republicans means of retreating, and not to reduce them to the necessity of conquering or dying. It was then agreed upon, in the council of war, there should be no attack by the road to Vannes. At two o'clock in the afternoon, troops of fugitives were seen flying out of Nantes by that road. M. de Talmont, carried away by too much ardour, and forgetting the resolution adopted by the council of war, took two pieces of cannon, and inconsiderately drove back the republicans into the town. Their defence became the more obstinate.

The Vendéens showed also in the attack more perseverance than could have been expected. The battle lasted eighteen hours; but at last, having seen General Cathélineau mortally wounded by a ball in his breast, the elder M. Fleuriot, who commanded the division of Bonchamp, and several other officers having fallen likewise, discouragement and fatigue made the soldiers retire at the close of day. The chiefs exerted themselves very much to encourage the peasants. M. de Talmont had his horse killed by a cannon ball. My father was for a while so completely enveloped in the fire of a battery, that every body thought him dead.

The army was dissolved; officers and soldiers repassed the Loire, and the right bank was entirely abandoned. Few soldiers were lost; but the death of Cathélineau was a very great misfortune. M. de Fleuriot deserved also to be much regretted; neither of them survived their wounds many days.

Meanwhile, the Bocage was also the theatre of actions which had not been foreseen. Some peasants

had mustered together at Amaillou, between Bressuire and Parthenay, for the safety of the country. M. de Lescure was informed that General Biron's army at Niort increased every day, and that the advanced guard was at Saint Maixent, threatening Parthenay. He sent immediately to Saumur, to desire M. de Baugé, the Chevaliers de Beauvolliers and de Beaurepaire, to go to Amaillou; and although wounded, and ill in health, he would go there himself to watch over the defence of that post. I accompanied him, as I could not bear to leave him in that situation.

We stopped one night at Clisson; and the next day arrived at Amaillou, where we found M***, who had joined the army. That gentleman was about thirty years of age. In order to give himself a very distinguished appearance, he had put on a blue velvet coat embroidered with spangles, wore a bag, a chapeau-de-bras, and a sword by his side; it was his first appearance in the camp. He said, that having been informed that the chiefs were not present, he thought himself obliged to come to Amaillou and offer his services. M. de Lescure thanked him very much, and begged him, his officers being very much fatigued, to take charge of the camp, and to give orders for the bivouac. He was kept all night in the rain, and far from the fire; and appeared no more at the camp.

The day after, as I was walking with the Chevalier de Beauvolliers, we saw all the peasants in confusion. They had taken up two republican light horsemen; we guessed they were deserters; and they really came from Saint Maixent. Their flight had been discovered; they had been pursued five leagues, and had arrived quite breath-

less. Our people surrounded them; some said they were spies, others that they should cry out *Vive le Roi!* and some wanted to put them to death. We took them under the arm, and conducted them to M. de Lescure, who was in his bed; he questioned them. The first answered gaily that his name was Cadet; he had been put in the legion of the north, but, wishing to fight for the King, he had deserted. The second appeared embarrassed, and his manner gave some suspicion to M. de Lescure, who recommended that he should be watched. Soon after, he distinguished himself by his courage and his merit; and then declared that he was of a good family in Auvergne, and that his name was Solilhac. I do not know what induced him to disguise himself at first; he has since always been one of the bravest officers of La Vendée.

The presence of M. de Lescure having brought a great number of peasants to Amaillou, he thought it necessary to advance and occupy Parthenay. M. Girard, de Beaurepaire, who commanded a small division attached to M. de Royrand's army, sent him word he would join him with 150 horsemen, much needed, as M. de Lescure had only fifteen. This junction took place at Parthenay.

They expected to be attacked. M. de Baugé and the Chevalier Beaurepaire had all the outlets of the town walled up, except the gates of Thouars and of St Maixent. Two pieces of cannon were placed at the latter; an advanced guard was posted, and sentinels; it was agreed, that every hour a patrol should go a league, and then return, so that there should always be one out. M. Girard de Beaurepaire was charged to watch over the execution of all these precautionary measures; which,

however, were neglected: he went to bed, and the midnight patrol did not take place. The advanced guard of the republicans, commanded by General Westermann, arrived at the gate; the sentinel was killed, and the battery surprised. Goujon, one of the six dragoons who had deserted, let himself be killed in defending the pieces with courage.

MM. de Lescure and de Baugé had thrown themselves on the same bed. M. de Baugé rose immediately and ran to the gate of St Maixent. He found it abandoned. The peasants were in full rout;—he received a ball which broke his leg, and found himself in the middle of the Blues. Favoured by the night, he escaped to the river, and swam his horse. Being then known, they fired at him several times; the second discharge killed the horse. But the Vendéens, who were on the other side, at last succeeded in saving him.

M. de Lescure, who suffered very much from his wound, had a great deal of difficulty in making his escape, and was very near being taken.

The next morning the republicans occupied the town, in which they had not dared to advance much during the night.

M. de Lescure would not allow me to follow him to Parthenay. I had returned from Amaillou to Clisson; he sent a horseman to inform me of what was passing. This man arrived in a full gallop; fear had made him lose his senses; he thought himself pursued. He knocked at my door and awoke me, calling out, "Madam, I come from M. de Lescure, who bids you make your escape;—we have been beaten at Parthenay;—fly." A panic seized me. I had hardly recollection sufficient to ask if anything had happened to my hus-

band. I dressed myself in haste, forgetting to fasten my clothes, and calling up every body. I ran into the court-yard, still holding my gown, where, finding a company of mowers, I told them that it was not a time to work, and that they must go and fight. I seized on the arm of an old man of eighty, bidding him conduct me to a farm, the way to which I seemed to have forgotten. I dragged the poor man there, who could hardly walk, while I ran. I soon found, however, that all these fears were groundless. M. de Lescure having retreated peaceably, and without being either pursued or injured, I set out for Châtillon on horseback, and was quite surprised, on entering it, to be eagerly surrounded by the people, crying out, "Here she is! here she is!" The report was spread that M. de Lescure and I had been taken at Parthenay; every body was in consternation. I told them what I knew, and then took the road to Boulaye. I found my mother, who, on learning the false news, had determined to go to Niort, to perish with me on a scaffold. We were very happy to meet; though she could scarcely believe her eyes.

Meanwhile M. de la Rochejaquelein saw his garrison of Saumur diminish every day. Nothing could keep the peasants; for they believed all was finished, and that there was nothing more to fear. They one by one returned to their farm and their oxen. M. de la Rochejaquelein saw very well, that in a little while he should not have a soldier; and he employed himself in sending every day to the Bocage, powder, artillery, and ammunition of all kinds. To deceive the inhabitants, he galloped every night with some officers through the town, crying, "Vive le Roi!" At last he found himself

only the ninth man at Saumur. Three thousand republicans had just taken possession of Chinon: it was necessary to quit the town. There remained two cannon; he took them away; but at Thouars he was obliged to throw them into the river. He arrived at Amaillou, the day on which M. de Lescure retired from Parthenay.

These two gentlemen perceived clearly, they had not men enough to defend this district. They retreated on Châtillon, to assemble the great army. General Westermann, on his side, advanced with about 10,000 men. He entered Parthenay; from thence he came to Amaillou, without finding any resistance. He set fire to the village. This was the beginning of the republican burnings. Westermann then marched on Clisson: he knew it was the chateau of M. de Lescure, and imagining he must find there a numerous garrison, and experience an obstinate resistance, he advanced with all his men, and not without great precautions, to attack this chateau of the chief of the *brigands*. He arrived about nine o'clock at night. Some peasants, concealed, fired a few shots from the wood and garden, which frightened the republicans very much; but they seized some women, and learned there was nobody at Clisson, which, besides, was incapable of being defended. Westermann then entered, and wrote from thence to the Convention a triumphant letter, which was published in the newspapers, sending the will and the picture of M. de Lescure; and relating, that after having crossed many ravines, ditches, and covered ways, he had at last reached the den of that monster, *vomited from hell*, and was going to set fire to it. In fact, he had straw and faggots

brought into the rooms, the garrets, the stables, and the farm; and took all his measures that nothing should escape the fire. The furniture was consumed; * immense quantities of corn and hay were not spared; it was the same everywhere. Afterwards, the republican armies burnt even provisions, though the rest of France was suffering from famine.

I was gone to dine at Châtillon with the gentlemen the day they were informed of the burning of Clisson. It did not make much impression on us; we had long foreseen this event; but the course of Westermann was important; he had first advanced to Bressuire, and was then coming on Châtillon. The army was dissolved; the soldiers had repassed the Loire only the day before, returning from Nantes. The conflagrations of the Blues frightened the peasants; they wanted, before they fought, to place in safety their wives, their children, and their cattle. In short, the chiefs were in the greatest embarrassment. They began to write requisitions, and to send couriers to carry them. Horses were wanting. M. de Lescure employed me to go to the parishes of Treize-Vents and of Mallièvre, near La Boulaye, to deliver orders. I galloped off; and on my arrival, I had the tocsin sounded; delivered the requisition to the parish council, and harangued the peasants the best I could; going from thence to Mallièvre to do the

* M. de Lescure, who foresaw very well the burning of his chateau, had given, long before, orders to take out the furniture; but learning the terror that this news had spread in the neighbourhood, the inhabitants abandoning their farms, &c., he gave counter orders; thus the chateau was burnt, with all the furniture, linen, &c. &c.

same, and sent expresses to the neighbouring parishes. I then returned to my mother at La Boulaye.

Westermann did not allow time for our measures to produce an effect; he continued to advance. MM. de Lescure and de la Rochejaquelein could not assemble three thousand men: wishing, however, to deceive him about their strength, they attempted to defend the heights of the Mill aux Chèvres; but the soldiers were always ill-disposed, and lost courage, when, instead of attacking, they had to defend themselves. The position was carried by the republicans, and it became necessary to fall back and abandon Châtillon, which is not defensible. In this battle, M. de la Bigotière, an emigrant, had an arm shattered by a cannon ball. He would not suffer the peasants to leave off fighting to assist him. He hid himself in a cottage, remained there for some moments insensible; and in the evening went on foot to a village. He was taken to Chollet, where his arm was cut off; and a month after, hardly cured, he returned to the army, and was again wounded.

During this battle, all the women were, according to their custom, on their knees in prayer, while waiting for the event. We listened attentively to the noise of the cannon; and its distance made us judge of the position of the army. Very soon I heard it roll louder and nearer. A panic seized me; I fled without waiting for anything, crossing the Sèvre at Mallièvre; then entering a cottage, I dressed myself like a country-woman, from head to foot, choosing in preference the most tattered clothes; then I went to meet my mother, and the inhabitants of La Boulaye, who followed me less precipitately, and whom I found again at

Mallièvre. We took the road to Herbiers. In the way, M. de Concise came to beg us to stop at his sister's-in-law, at the Château de Concise; M. de Talmont and my father were there from Nantes. Madame de Concise was not yet accustomed to the Vendéen manners; we found her wearing rouge, and trying to be nervous. But she received us very well. The next day we went to Herbiers, where I was persuaded to leave off my disguise. My mother was very ill after all was over. She had a great deal of self-command; and in the moment of danger, she kept her presence of mind; but suffered the more afterwards, for the violent efforts she had made; while I, who yielded to the first emotion, forgot the danger as soon as it was past.

CHAPTER X.

RETAKING OF CHATILLON—BATTLES OF MARTIGNE AND VIHIERS—ELECTION OF M. D'ELBEE—ATTACK OF LUCON.

WESTERMANN took Châtillon, but spared the inhabitants. Six hundred republican prisoners, found there, were liberated. The very next day he sent a detachment to burn La Durbellière, M. de la Rochejaquelein's chateau. It was a vast, ancient pile, embosomed in woods, and with a wide moat round it. The Blues approached still more cautiously than they had done at Clisson, and retired precipitately, after setting fire to it. The peasants extinguished the fire as soon as they were gone.

Meanwhile the chiefs were assembling the grand army at Chollet. Westermann expected an attack from that side, and had taken precautions; yet our people passed La Sèvre, and arrived near Châtillon undiscovered; at the same time the *Te Deum* was singing by the constitutional Bishop of St Maixent. The Vendéens were numerous, and exasperated to madness by the taking of Châtillon and the burning of their houses. Finding the Blues encamped on a height near a windmill, the peasants crept silently round them without firing, till they came very near. The astonished republicans did not hold out long; the post was carried, and the men killed at their guns. In an instant the rout was complete; ammunition waggons and cannons, overturned in the rapid descent leading to Châtillon, increased the disorder; reinforcements, met on the road, were driven back by the runaways; Westermann himself escaped with difficulty, at the head of 300 horsemen.

The enraged peasants, flushed by victory, gave no quarter. It was in vain the officers called to the republicans, "Surrender, you shall have your lives:"—the men went on killing. In the town the carnage was still more dreadful. M. de Lescure, who commanded the vanguard, passing through Châtillon in the pursuit, had ordered some hundreds of prisoners to be confined; but the peasants cut them down, and were countenanced by M. de Marigny. M. d'Elbée and others, wanting to put a stop to this, saw muskets levelled at themselves. M. de Lescure, informed of this, came back immediately; about sixty prisoners pressed round him, holding by his clothes and his horse. His appearance at the prison put a stop to the dis-

order—for the soldiers respected him too much not to obey him. But M. de Marigny called to him, "Go away,—let me kill these monsters;—did they not burn your chateau?" M. de Lescure entreated him to cease, and said he was determined to defend the prisoners against everybody. Although the massacre was stopped at Châtillon, most of the runaways were knocked down about the fields in their flight. It was the burning of the village of Amaillou, particularly, which had excited such a rage among the peasants. They made more than four thousand prisoners. The whole baggage of the republican army fell into their hands, even Westermann's carriage.*

During the battle, M. Richard, a surgeon, seeing a hussar rushing on M. de Lescure, threw himself between them, and received a shot in the eye, which came out behind the neck. He survived the wound.

M. de la Trésorière, made prisoner before by the Vendéens, and delivered by Westermann when he took Châtillon, had interfered effectually in favour of the inhabitants. Instead of making his escape with the Blues, he surrendered himself as a prisoner again, and asked to be received in the Vendéen army as a common soldier. He behaved so well in the ranks, that he was soon made an officer.

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* Four young officers had the imprudence to break open the strong box in that carriage, which raised a suspicion that they had taken money out of it. But M. de Lescure having declared, in the council of war, that the brave Dupérat, one of the four, had given him his word of honour that they found nothing in the box, the high character of that young man cleared them.

We had waited for the event of the battle with the utmost anxiety at Herbiers. As soon as it was known, we returned to La Boulaye, where M. de Lescure also came to have his wound, which was very painful, properly attended to.

After a few days' rest, news came that the republicans, changing their plans, were going to attack La Vendée, by the bridge of Cé in Anjou; and preparations were made accordingly.

The 15th of July, the republican army, after passing Cé, came by Brissac to Martigné. The Vendéen army was ready. M. de Bonchamp commanded his division in person for the first time since he had been wounded at Fontenay. He and M. de Lescure wanted to march all night by a short cut to the enemy, to avoid the heat, which was extreme. An old M. de ———, who had joined the army for the first time, insisted upon taking another road, shorter and better. Being an old soldier, seventy years of age, his opinion was adopted.

The peasants had three leagues to march, and reached Martigné much exhausted; yet the advantage was on their side at first. They took five cannon; but M. de Marigny, in attempting to turn the enemy at the head of a detachment of cavalry, missed the way, and returned at full gallop. The dust prevented our people from knowing him; and they thought it was the enemy, and fell back, carrying with them three pieces of the enemy. There was no bringing them on again, the heat was so overpowering. M. de Bonchamp had his elbow shattered by a ball; a very good officer of his division, Vannier, who had been valet-de-chambre of

M. d'Autichamp, was severely, but not dangerously, wounded.

The republicans, owing to the heat did not, pursue, and our loss was trifling; but more than fifty peasants perished by drinking water, either too cold, or of a bad quality. M. de Lescure, exhausted chiefly by calling aloud to the soldiers, having also drank of that water, was in a swoon during two hours.

MM. de Lescure and de la Rochejaquelein returned to Chollet to rally their forces. The republicans went on to Vihiers and Coron. Our generals hastened that way, where fortunately the parishes were populous, and had always furnished the best soldiers we had. On the 18th, having a sufficient number of peasants, the Blues were attacked; MM. de Lescure and de la Rochejaquelein had not arrived, nor any of the chief officers; L'Abbé Bernier persuaded the soldiers that their generals were on the spot, gave excellent directions, and in a great degree managed the whole. MM. de Villeneuve, Keller, de Piron, de Marsange, Forestier, Forêt, Herbauld, Guignard, led on with courage and ability. In about three quarters of an hour the republicans were routed, and abandoned their cannon and ammunition. General Santerre,* who commanded, was one of the

* This man had been an eminent brewer in the suburb of Saint Antoine, and his influence and popularity among the labourers in that district, was the chief cause of the insurrections which usually began in that quarter. He commanded that of 10th August, when the Tuilleries were assaulted. But he showed so much reluctance to put his pikemen into action, that Westermann pointed his sword to

first that fled. The Vendéens knew he was there, and had a great desire to take the man who had presided at the execution of the King, and intended to chain him in an iron cage. Forêt was close at his heels, and on the point of seizing him, when Santerre made his horse leap over a wall six feet high. M. de Villeneuve was likewise very near taking the representative Bourbotte, who leapt from his horse behind a hedge. The Blues burnt Vihiers in their flight, which did not displease the Vendéens, as it had always favoured the republicans. Only three houses were saved; one belonged to the only royalist in the town.

MM. de Lescure and de la Rochejaquelein hearing the cannon, guessed immediately that the attack had been made twenty-four hours before the appointed time. They repaired to the spot in haste, and found the peasants bringing away cannon. M. de Lescure asked, "What is all this?"—"What, General, were you not at the battle? It must have been M. Henri who commanded us!" Other peasants said the same thing to M. de la Rochejaquelein. The officers owned afterwards to the generals, that they had used their names to encourage the soldiers. The defeat of the republicans had been so complete, that the country was entirely freed from them;—they had gone to Saumur.

The head-quarters were again at Châtillon. Dining there, I was witness of a scene showing the

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his throat to compel him to act. He then gave orders to advance, but halted himself at the Hotel de Ville, and never appeared during the action. He commanded the armed force at Paris, when Louis XVI. was executed.

character of the Vendéen soldiers. An officer had sent to prison two millers of the parish of Treize-Vents, for some trifling fault; they were good soldiers, and loved by their comrades. The peasants began to murmur, saying they were treated too harshly; forty men of the parish went to the prison, declaring they were as guilty as the prisoners, and they must be confined too. Beauvolliers came to tell me of this, and advised I should ask their pardon from M. de Lescure, that he might not appear to yield to a clamour. I repaired to the spot, told the peasants that I should speak in favour of their comrades, because the chateau of La Boulaye was in the parish of Treize-Vents. M. de Lescure appeared afterwards to grant my request. I went myself to the prison, followed by all the peasants, and had the prisoners set at liberty.—"We are very thankful to you, my lady," the people of Treize-Vents said; "but it was wrong, notwithstanding, to have put these men in prison." Such were our soldiers, perfectly obedient in battle; out of it, considering themselves as free.

Meanwhile, the brave Cathélineau sunk under his wounds, which had never allowed a moment's hope of his life. The question was to replace him. It was very evident how advantageous it would be to name a commander-in-chief, not only for the great army, but for all the Vendéen forces. In this view they proceeded to the election; but, as the ranks were not well defined, it was scarcely known who ought to have the privilege of voting; and, instead of assembling deputies from each division, the business was all managed by a little manœuvring of M. d'Elbée's. Some officers of the divisions of MM. de Charrette, de Bonchamp, and de

Royrand, but who were not at all distinguished, except by their attachment to M. d'Elbée, met a number of officers from the grand army, and they agreed that four names should be written in each ticket, and that he who had the most votes should be generalissimo; the four highest after this were to be next in rank, and choose each one under them. The council of war was to consist of these nine persons, who were to decide on all operations. M. d'Elbée was named commander-in-chief. M. de Bonchamp, who, according to the opinion of all sensible people, ought to have been named, was detained at Jallais by his wounds, and his division remained in Anjou. M. de Charrette scarce knew that such a nomination was in agitation; M. de la Rochejaquelein did not think about it; M. de Lescure was sick, and quite unfit for all manœuvring, as well as my father. The four generals of division were MM. de Bonchamp, de Lescure, de Donnissan, and de Royrand. M. de Lescure chose for his lieutenant M. de la Rochejaquelein; M. de Royrand, I know not why, M. de C***; M. de Bonchamp, I believe, did not choose anybody. As for my father, seeing that, in the general formation of the army, M. de Charrette had been forgotten, he named him. M. de Charrette was very sensible of this mark of attention of my father; but he found the whole arrangement of the nomination very ridiculous. M. de Bonchamp wrote from his bed these few words to M. d'Elbée: "Sir, I congratulate you on your election; it has probably been your great talents which have determined the votes." This, however, did not interrupt their good understanding.

This nomination of M. d'Elbée appeared singu-

lar; but nothing more was said of it. He was a man of courage and principle. The officers knew he would let them do as they pleased, and that things would go as they had done, quite satisfied with having the title of commander-in-chief, to which his ambition was confined. They did not think of objecting to what had been done.

M. d'Elbée, on the other hand, to make his election forgiven, and to show his affability, made more bows and compliments than ever, lavishing them on the least aide-de-camp.

M. de Talmont continued to command the cavalry, and M. de Marigny the artillery, having under him M. de Perault, who had been some time in the army. He was an officer of the marines, and Chevalier de St Louis, about fifty years of age. He showed constantly a great deal of bravery, merit, and modesty. MM. de Marigny and de Perault, entirely occupied with their duty, remained always united, without jealousy or rivalry.

Many other officers had joined successively the Vendéen army. It is a duty and a consolation to me to place their names here, and to contribute all in my power to honour their memory. I would wish not to omit any. M. de Lacroix, an emigrant, and Chevalier de St Louis, was a very brave and good man, and without any pretensions. M. Roger Moulinier was active, but harsh and strict; his soldiers feared him, and had confidence in him on account of his excessive bravery. The Chevalier Durivault of Poitiers: M. de Lescure chose him for aide-de-camp, and never had reason to repent it. A brother of M. de Beauvolliers, fifteen years old, came to the army, and, having shown some deficiency of courage the first time he

saw an engagement, M. de Beauvolliers the elder reproached him publicly; since then, he has always been worthy of his family.

I shall add to the names of these officers, whom I have had the opportunity of knowing more particularly, those of MM. de Chantereau, de Dieuzy, Caquerey, Bernés, pages of the King; MM. Beaud de Bellevue, Bernard de Cerizais, Blouin de Rochefort, Bonin des Aubiers, Pallierne, Frey, de Brunet, de Brocour, Genest, de Josselin, Morinais de Nesde, de la Pelouze, the brothers de Saujeon, Tranquille, d'Izernay, Valois, Texier, de Courlay, and another Texier, an officer of artillery, well known in the army for his bravery.

In the beginning, all the deserters from the republicans became officers in the Vendéen army; but their number becoming rather considerable, they were formed into three companies; one French, commanded by M. de Fé; the other German; the third Swiss; each about 120 men, and mounted guard regularly at Martigné, where the magazines were. The Swiss company was almost entirely composed of fugitives from a detachment of the unfortunate regiment of guards. They were quartered in Normandy at the time of the slaughter of their countrymen, the 10th of August, and breathed revenge;—they all fought desperately. M. Keller, a Swiss, one of the bravest and finest-looking men in the army, commanded them.—These companies did not fight in a line, and would have been overpowered if they had not followed the irregular mode of warfare of the peasants.

Immediately after M. d'Elbée's election, the army returned to attack the republicans. M. de Bonchamp's division had beaten them twice, and

forced them to repass the Loire. MM. d'Elbée and de la Rochejaquelein went to Thouars, and met with little resistance on that side; Henri even made an excursion as far as Loudun. During that time, M. de Lescure, who was not well, remained at La Boulaye. He received a letter there from an officer of M. de Royrand's division, asking for immediate assistance from the grand army. This division had acted sometimes in concert with our generals. In the beginning of the war, it had brilliant successes at Chantonnay. Since then, it had defended the district of Montaigu, and the road from Fontenay to Nantes, against some attacks, and made one unsuccessful attempt to enter Luçon. M. de Royrand was a man of great merit, and had some distinguished officers, MM. Sapineau de la Verrie, the brothers Béjarry de Verteuil, de Grelier, &c.; but some of them were very indifferent, and the soldiers were thought the worst of any we had.

The republicans leaving Luçon, attacked the bridge of Charron and Chantonnay, and carried both; they took M. Sapineau de la Verrie prisoner, and put him to death. The news of these reverses induced M. de Lescure to set out immediately for M. de Royrand's division. Other generals, then at Argenton, joined him at Herbiers, where the army assembled.

The republicans retired to Luçon; we attacked them there, at first with advantage; but some soldiers, and even officers, having begun to pillage the neighbouring houses, occasioned disorder, and the enemy took advantage of it. Our generals could not rally the soldiers, nor bring back victory, notwithstanding their courageous efforts. M.

de Talmont distinguished himself very much at the head of the cavalry, and his firmness contributed to save the army. M. de Lescure had his horse wounded; M. d'Elbée run some risk of being taken.

This march of the army was of no service, except recovering the important post of Chantonnay. The men had been called together suddenly, and had not mustered in great numbers, being harvest time. The affair of Luçon, however, would have ended differently, had it not been for the irregularities in which two or three of the officers were implicated. There was an idea of trying the guilty by a court-martial; but this was given up for fear of disgusting the soldiers, as it would have been necessary to punish some of the inferior officers. The good-will of the army was not compatible with strict discipline; but the cases requiring punishment were fortunately very uncommon. M—— who commanded at ———, was broke; and the defeat was announced as a punishment of God.

CHAPTER XI.

ARRIVAL OF M. DE TINTENIAC.—SECOND BATTLE OF LUCON.—VICTORY OF CHANTONNAY.

After the battle of Luçon, the army returned to defend La Vendée, which was now attacked incessantly, and upon all sides. The division of Bonchamp protected Anjou, and the left bank of the Loire; M. de la Rochejaquelein was posted on the

side of the Thouars and Doué; M. de Lescure formed a camp at St Sauveur, near Bressuire; and M. de Royrand occupied Chantonnay, and his principal forces concentrated at the camp of L'Oie, as formerly; M. de Charrette was then carrying on a more active war. At all these points, successes were various; but the republicans were not able to penetrate the Bocage.

The peasants had been forbidden to send cattle to market in those towns which were not in the possession of the Vendéens. M. de Lescure, learning that, notwithstanding this prohibition, the market of Parthenay was well supplied, went there with a party, seized all the cattle that were for sale, and sent them to Châtillon. His life was that day in great danger. Passing through a street, at the head of some dragoons, and conversing with M. de Marsanges, a gendarme on horseback, who was concealed behind a gate, sprung forward, and fired a pistol almost close to his breast. The shot passed between him and M. de Marsanges. The gendarme then turned, and fled at full gallop; but was overtaken and killed by the dragoons.

A proclamation had been issued for some time past, announcing to the republicans that they must expect retaliation for all shootings, burnings, &c.

According to this declaration, Parthenay ought to have been burnt, as many of the inhabitants had accompanied Westermann, the only one who had yet pursued such measures. M. de Lescure assembled the inhabitants, and said to them, "It is very fortunate for you that it is I that took your town; for if I burnt it, as I ought, it might be attributed to personal revenge for the burning of Clisson;—I shall therefore spare you." He took, how-

ever, two of the administrators' wives as hostages, and shut his eyes to some pillage, although very repugnant to his feelings. The soldiers, taking advantage of this, made havoc in some houses, but committed no personal violence; and a woman having been killed by chance at a window, the Vendéens felt so much concern, that they gave a thousand francs to her family. I ought to add here, for the honour of our armies, that, notwithstanding the announced retaliation, it was never put in execution. The Royalists could not bring themselves to imitate the burnings, the massacres, and the cruelties of the Blues! The humanity of the Vendéens is as celebrated as their valour; and calumny never dared to asperse either.

In order to retrieve the defeat of Luçon effectually, it became necessary to bring greater forces into the field, and take better measures. It was therefore resolved upon, that the division of Bonchamp should be left for the defence of Anjou, and that active operations should be concerted between MM. de Charrette, de Royrand, and the generals of the grand army; and M. d'Elbée was sent to collect the troops on the side of Beaupréau.

At this very moment, M. le Chevalier de Tinténiac arrived from England, sent by the government of that country to the insurgent chiefs. He had, during the night, landed alone from a fishing-boat, on the coast of St Malo. He was unacquainted with the roads, and had not even taken the precaution of having false passports. At three in the morning he passed through the town of Château Neuf.

They called to him, "Who goes there?" he answered, "A citizen," and walked on. When the

day broke, not knowing how to proceed, he accosted a peasant. After some conversation, he determined to confide in him, and risk his life, by telling him he was an emigrant, and was seeking his way into La Vendée. The peasant led him to his cottage, and kept him two days, while the municipality was consulted. The people in this part of Brittany were so inimical to the revolution, that in most of the parishes there was hardly one individual favourable to it. The municipality made M. de Tinténiac put on a disguise, and gave him a guide. He procured others successively in every parish, and was brought in safety to the banks of the Loire, where, after having travelled fifty leagues on foot in five nights, he had the good fortune to get faithful watermen, who carried him across the river, through the armed vessels of the republicans. He was landed near where the division of M. de Lyrot was encamped, and from thence an officer conducted him to Boulaye, where there were staff-officers.

The insurgents never till that time had any communication with England. While at Noirmoutier, M. de Charrette had sent one of the MM. la Roberie, but he was lost in the passage; and another agent, M. de la Godellière, arrived safe in England, but having lost his papers, could not be accredited there, and was lost himself afterwards on his return. M. de Tinténiac belonged to one of the first families of Brittany. He was thirty years of age, a small man, but appeared quick and intelligent. He carried his dispatches as wadding, in two pistols.

He found at Boulaye my father, M. de Lescure, M. de la Rochejaquelein, the Bishop of Agra, and

the Chevalier Desessarts, who received him at first with some distrust, and expressed surprise that such a commission had not been given to a Vendéen emigrant.

M. de Tinténiac said, that some of them had refused; and then, with a frankness that did him great credit, he added, "I will own to you, gentlemen, that, independent of my attachment to your cause, I wished to expiate the errors of my early youth, which have been very great, by an action as dangerous as meritorious."

His dispatches were from Mr Dundas, and from the Governor of Jersey. They contained praises of the constancy and bravery of the insurgents, and expressed an earnest desire to afford them every assistance. Nine questions were proposed, to which precise answers were requested.

The ignorance of the English, in all that concerned us, was so complete, that the letters were addressed to M. Gaston, the barber, who was killed at the beginning of the war, and who, M. de Tinténiac told us, was supposed in London to be the officer who commanded at Longwy. We were extremely surprised at this ignorance, as, for a long while past, the proclamations of our generals had been inserted in the newspapers; and were, therefore, led to conclude, that the English, instead of zeal for the royal cause, felt great indifference towards continental affairs, or, from some motive, pretended ignorance.

They desired to know what the real object of our revolt was, and the nature of our opinions? What occasioned the rising of the country? Why we did not endeavour to establish a correspondence with England? What connexion we had with the

other provinces, or with the continental powers? Of what extent was the insurgent country? The number of soldiers? What our resources were? What ammunition of all kinds we had? How did we procure them? And, lastly, What kind of assistance did we require? And what place appeared to us the proper one for a landing?

The dispatches were written with a tone of sincerity, and apprehension that we might reject the offers of England. They seemed also uncertain what our views were; whether we were inclined to support the ancient constitution, the opinions of the constituent assembly, or the Girondin faction.

Mutual confidence was soon established between our generals and M. de Tinténiac. He saw us as we were, and dispelled all our doubts respecting himself, by laying aside the diplomatic reserve of an English envoy, and opening his heart to us. He told us, that in England nothing was known with precision respecting La Vendée. It was supposed that about 40,000 revolted troops of the line had begun the insurrection, and that it was, as in Normandy, excited by the republican party of Gironde. We knew that our princes could have no share in the mission of M. de Tinténiac, as none of them were at that time in England. He assured us that the English government appeared much disposed to assist us, and that all seemed ready for a landing on the coast of France; but still he could not help suspecting these appearances, as he was dissatisfied with the conduct of the English ministry towards the emigrants. Many of them, desirous of joining the insurgents, had wished to sail from Jersey to the coast of France; but that an order from government had prohibited pilots, *under pain*

of death, carrying them there. M. de Tinténiac alone, on account of his mission, had been allowed to embark.

A speedy answer was required, as M. de Tinténiac was to pass only four days in La Vendée; his guide having been appointed to meet him on a certain day, on the other side of the Loire. I could then write a small and legible hand. I was employed, as their secretary, to write the dispatches that were to travel in M. de Tinténiac's pistols. I do not believe there is now alive any one of the persons who signed them; and I alone, perhaps, can give the particulars of this correspondence.

They answered the English minister with sufficient openness; and explained the political views of the Vendéens. That the impossibility of communication had been the sole cause of their not having solicited succours, which were extremely wanted. Care was taken, however, to exaggerate a little our strength, lest the English should be led to fear that their exertions might be misplaced. They advised a landing at Sables, or at Paimbœuf, promising to join them with 50,000 men, at a place and day fixed. We informed them that M. de Charrette had lost l'Ile de Noirmoutier; but that he could easily possess the port of St Gilles. As to Rochefort, Rochelle, and L'Orient, which the English had mentioned in their letter, we stated how difficult it would be for us to take possession of these ports.

It must be acknowledged that, considering the facilities we offered to the English for a landing, and that they seemed already prepared, they evin-

ced at least a great tardiness in adopting the measure.

It was particularly and urgently desired, that the forces landed should be commanded by a Bourbon Prince, and in a great part composed of emigrants; and that, in that case, they might rely on complete success. We said that 20,000 young men should join the troops, and accompany them out of their own country; and that, on crossing the Loire, we knew all Brittany would rise, being assured of the sentiments of this province, although not in direct correspondence.

All the generals who were at Boulaye signed this answer, and the Bishop of Agra boldly added his name. The generals wrote also to the princes, assuring them of their devotion and profound obedience, and expressing the earnest desire they had to see one of them in La Vendée. This letter was short, because the English ministry were to read it; but M. de Tinténiac had seen enough to relate verbally every particular to the princes. We pressed upon him the interests of La Vendée, and frankly showed him how much it stood in need of assistance; at the same time, repeatedly assuring him, that a prince with 10,000 men, even without arms or money, would be sufficient to ensure success. On every point he was told the exact truth, that he might repeat it to the princes.

As neither M. d'Elbée, nor M. de Bonchamp were present, the generals at Boulaye were desirous that M. de Tinténiac should see them, and receive their assent to all that had been done; and he set out with the intention of seeing them on his way, but, I believe, did not accomplish it. He ex-

pressed extreme regret in leaving us on the eve of an important battle; and would have wished to join the Vendéens, in an attack of Luçon, which was then preparing, and, at the desire of some Swiss, fixed for the 10th of August. Our generals, however, representing to him that it would be much more useful for him to hasten to England, he set out for the camp of M. de Lyrot, from which a patrol escorted him to the other side of the Loire, where he found his guide; and, travelling by night, arrived at the house of a good peasant near Chateau Neuf. Here he found means of sailing to Jersey, and from thence was sent to England; but I have heard that his dispatches were lost at sea. Since that, in the year 1794, he made more than once this perilous journey, and conducted the intercourse between England and La Vendée, with extraordinary courage and address. At one time he swam across the Loire, holding his dispatches in his teeth. And it is asserted, that being once in the middle of Nantes, and finding himself near the ferocious Carrier, he escaped, by threatening to blow out his brains. In the year 1795, he headed a division of insurgent Bretons, to favour the descent at Quiberon.

The unfortunate result of this expedition did not discourage him from supporting the war with determined resolution, at the head of his small troop. He was killed at last, fighting bravely. The intrepid M. de Tinténiac was, in character and talents, one of the most distinguished men that has appeared during the civil war.

The preparations for the attack of Luçon were not so speedy as had been hoped for; and it was only on the 12th that the army were all assembled

at the camp of l'Oie. A council of war was held; but, instead of its admitting as formerly all the distinguished officers, it was formed according to the regulations adopted since the election of M. d'Elbée.

They had to fight in an open plain,—a new and difficult thing to the Vendéens. M. de Lescure proposed arranging the divisions behind each other, in such a manner that they could successively support; and warmly urged the advantages of this plan, which was adopted. MM. de Charrette and de Lescure were appointed to lead the left wing, which was to begin the attack; MM. d'Elbée, de Royrand, and my father, were to command the centre; MM. de la Rochejaquelein and de Marigny the right wing. MM. de Charrette and de Lescure began the action with great spirit. They had heard much of each other, and emulation added a new incitement to their usual bravery and desire of success. The Blues fell back at first, and the left wing had already taken five cannon, when they perceived the centre did not follow the movement. M. d'Elbée had given no instructions to his officers; and his soldiers, intending to fight according to their usual custom, by running upon the enemy, M. d'Elbée stopped them, and called repeatedly, "Form your lines, my friends, by my horse!"

M. Herbauld, who commanded a part of the centre, and who knew nothing of this circumstance, led his soldiers forward, without suspecting that the others did not follow. The republican general, seizing the moment of this disorder, made a manœuvre with the light artillery, which entirely separated M. d'Elbée's division; and this being followed by a charge of cavalry, the rout became complete. During this time M. de Marigny ha-

ving mistaken the road, arrived on the field only to witness the defeat. M. de la Rochejaquelein succeeded in covering the retreat, and saved many lives by a timely removal of an overturned waggon from the bridge of Bessay. In the midst of this rout of the centre, forty peasants of Courlay, with crossed bayonets, sustained the whole charge of cavalry without losing ground. These brave men belonged to the division of M. de Lescure, and were from a parish he had always particularly esteemed.

This unfortunate affair, the most disastrous that had yet taken place, cost many lives. The light artillery acted with great effect on the level plain; and the peasants had never taken flight in so much terror and disorder. We lost only two officers, M. Baudry d'Asson, who had begun the war in 1792, and M. Morinais of Châtillon.

M. de Lescure was blamed for having proposed an order of battle, which, though proper for troops of the line, was nearly impracticable with the peasants and most part of our officers; and for having pertinaciously insisted on the adoption of that plan. On his part he reproached M. d'Elbée with having done nothing to make it succeed. M. d'Elbée answered, "The plan was yours, sir, and you ought to have directed the whole."—"But once adopted," replied M. de Lescure, "it belonged to the general to see it executed. You conferred the command of the left wing on M. de Charrette and me. We have beat the enemy, and done our duty." I ought to mention, that the republican generals had been apprised by spies of the intended march of our army, and the hour of attack; and that some

troops, who did not belong to the country, deserted during the battle.

M. de Charrette returned into his canton after the retreat, made in good order, with M. de Lescure. They parted with mutual expressions of esteem. I had sent a messenger to gain intelligence of the battle, who not finding M. de Lescure immediately, M. de Charrette was so good as to write to me. His letter was extremely kind, and expressive of great admiration for my husband.

The Blues again occupied Chantonnay. We were much distressed at seeing them thus established in the Bocage, and in a situation, too, from which it was of the greatest importance to remove them. A new plan was concerted with M. de Royrand. He made a false attack on the side of the four roads, while the grand army, making a great circuit, assailed the republican rear-guard towards the bridge of Charron. The victory was due to Bonchamp's division, commanded by M. d'Autichamp, who, with great intrepidity, carried the entrenchments. Thus surrounded, the defeat of the Blues was terrible. The great roads were intercepted, and their columns bewildered in the Bocage. They lost both their cannon and baggage, and seldom had suffered so great a loss of men. A battalion that had assumed the name of the "Avenger," and had never given quarter to any Vendéen, was wholly exterminated.

The little Chevalier de Mondyon behaved in a very remarkable manner on this day. He happened to be near a tall officer, who, less brave than himself, proposed to withdraw, under pretence of being wounded. "I don't see that," said the boy; "and,

as your retiring will discourage our soldiers, I will shoot you through the head if you retreat a single step." As he was very capable of doing this, the officer remained at his post.

After the victory of Chantonnay, nearly all the chiefs assembled at Herbiers, to consult on means of defence, as every day the dangers increased.

The republican armies were become more numerous, better organized, and commanded by abler generals. The greater part of the garrisons of Mayence, Valenciennes, and Condé, whom the foreign powers had, by the articles of capitulation, left at liberty to serve in the interior of France, were sent post to the attack of La Vendée. Our situation was extremely critical. M. d'Elbée preserved his title of generalissimo; but the insurgent territory having been divided into four portions, each was under a distinct command. M. de Charrette commanded the environs of Nantes, and the coast; M. de Bonchamp, the borders of the Loire in Anjou; M. de la Rochejaquelein, the rest of the insurgent part of Anjou; M. de Lescure, all the Haute Vendée in Poitou. They had wished to unite to his army the troops of M. Royrand, and give him another appointment; but M. de Lescure showed so little anxiety about it, that M. de Royrand might be said to have a fifth command. M. de Talmont remained general in chief of the cavalry; M. de Marigny of the artillery; and Stofflet was named major-general. My father was created governor-general of all the insurgent country, and president of the council of war; M. de Royrand lieutenant-governor; MM. Duhoux Hautrive and de Boisy, assistants. This staff was stationed at Mortagne. The superior council, which had given

much dissatisfaction, remained at Châtillon. It had assumed rather too much; but was more ridiculous than oppressive. It was determined that the uniform of the officers should be a green vest, with white or black facings, &c. according to the divisions; but this was not done. Each division was to have a corps of twelve hundred select men, paid and trained as troops of the line, and subjected to the same discipline; but this corps could not be formed. Finally, it was determined that the former council of war, to which all the distinguished officers were admitted, should be re-established;—the select council had only been once held, on the eve of the unfortunate affair of Luçon. The reiterated attacks of the republican armies did not allow leisure for the execution of all the measures agreed upon at this last conference of Herbiers. When it was terminated, the chiefs separated; each repairing to his district. M. de Lescure returned to his camp at St Sauveur, and remained there undisturbed for some days. Being there on his estate, many of the peasants offered to pay him the suppressed rents. He told them, it was not to recover these that he fought; that their own sufferings were enough to entitle them to this slight indemnity; and that, at any rate, he would not take advantage of their superior honesty, and receive from them what no one else in France would pay.

M. de Lescure had soon afterwards two skirmishes with the republicans, who came to attack him from St Maixent, and then from d'Airvault, where they had formed a camp. The success was not very decided on either side, and each remained in their cantonments. At this time M. de Maignan, aged seventy, who had a place in the superior

council, determined to take an active part in the war. This good old man went to M. de Lescure, and desired to serve under him; and none showed more zeal and courage. The officers and M. de Lescure always called him their father. It was then also that M. Allard from Rochelle came and offered his services. Chance led him to address himself to my mother, who, affected by the manner in which he made his request, begged M. de la Rochejaquelein to appoint him his aide-de-camp; and he soon became his intimate friend and worthy fellow soldier.

CHAPTER XII.

BATTLES OF LA ROCHE ERIGNE, MARTIGNE, DOUE, THOUARS, CORON, BEAULIEU, TORFOU, MONTAIGU, ST FULGENT.—ATTACK OF THE CONVOY FROM CLISSON.

I AM now come to a disastrous period, where I shall no longer have to relate the successes and hopes of the Vendéens;—their courage serving only to lead them to new misfortunes.

The insurgent country was surrounded by 240,000 men; a great part of this force was from the *levées en masse* made in the neighbouring provinces; but they had besides some excellent troops. Dreadful measures had been adopted. The republicans burnt and destroyed every thing; their victories were followed by massacres; neither women

nor children were spared; and, finally, the Convention gave orders that the whole country should be turned into a desert, without a man, without a house, without a tree.

It was the division of Bonchamp, which, in the first days of September, began to act against the vast armies which surrounded us. They attacked La Roche d'Erigné, where the republicans had established a camp, which defended the bridges of Cé, and carried the position.

At the same time a party of the grand army, commanded by M. de la Rochejaquelein, went towards Martigné. The enemy, trusting to their superior force, attacked them. The combat was obstinate and bloody. Henri was in a hollow way giving orders, when a ball struck his hand, breaking his thumb in three places, and hitting his elbow. He did not drop a pistol which he held at that moment, but said to his servant, "Look if my elbow bleeds."—"No, sir."—"Well then, it is only my thumb broken;" and he continued to direct his troops. The night coming on, prevented the Vendéens from reaping the advantage they had gained, and the enemy retreated to Doué.

The next day the division of Bonchamp joined that of M. de la Rochejaquelein, whose wound obliged him to retire. Stofflet took the command, and marched to Doué, where the republicans were entrenched. They attacked them at first with success, but a charge of cavalry made the right of the Vendéens fall back, and threw them into disorder, and at the same moment Stofflet received a ball in his thigh: they were then obliged to retire, and lost some pieces of cannon. M. Stofflet, though severely wounded, continued to command, and, owing

to him, the retreat was made in tolerably good order. The republican troops, and the *levées en masse*, increased every day; but they only skirmished with our advanced guards; their strongest armies were at Nantes, Angers, Saumur, and Poitiers.

M. de Lescure left the camp of St Sauveur with 2000 men, on the 19th of September, to oppose the Blues who were assembling at Thouars. The national guards, and the *levées en masse*, formed there a camp of more than 20,000 men. Our troops at first were eminently successful; and the defeat would have been complete, had not a reinforcement from d'Airvault obliged M. de Lescure in his turn to retire; but the retreat was made in good order. The gendarmes wished to disturb it; but M. de Lescure and his officers waited for them with such firmness and resolution, that they did not dare to advance. The wounded were then carried away without interruption; M. de Lescure assisting in carrying the litters, which he often did, as well as the other officers. This attack of Thouars was extremely useful, for it discouraged the swarm of *levées en masse*, which filled that army; they disbanded, and never afterwards appeared.

It was after this battle, that the republicans found among the dead the body of a woman, about whom there was a great deal said in the newspapers. Some said it was me; others that it was Jeanne de Lescure, sister to the chief of the brigands, (*who never had one.*) It was also supposed that she had passed among the Vendéens for an inspired maid, like Joan of Arc. This last conjecture was equally false. The generals had not only strictly prohibited any women from following the army, but declared that any one found

there should be ignominiously banished; and during the short periods in which the troops were assembled, even female sutlers were not allowed to attend. Some time before the engagement at Thouars, a soldier accosted me at Boulaye, saying, he had a secret to confide to me. It was a woman, who was desirous of changing her woollen vest for one of the coarse cottons which was given to the poorest of the soldiers, and, fearing to be discovered, had applied to me, but entreated me not to inform M. de Lescure. She said her name was Jeanne Robin, and that she was from Courlay. The vicar of that parish, to whom I wrote, answered that she was a very good girl, but that he had been unable to dissuade her from being a soldier, and that she had taken the sacrament immediately before leaving home.

The evening before the battle, she sought for M. de Lescure, and addressing him, said, "General, I am a woman! Madame de Lescure knows it, and also that my character is good. To-morrow there is to be a battle, let me but have a pair of shoes; I am sure I shall fight so, that you will not send me away." She indeed fought under the eye of M. de Lescure, and called to him, "General, you must not pass me, I shall always be nearer the Blues than you." She was wounded in the hand, but this only animated her the more; and showing it to him, said, "This is nothing." Rushing furiously into the thickest part of the engagement, she perished.

There were in other divisions a few women, who fought also disguised as men. I saw two sisters, fourteen and fifteen years old, who were very courageous. In the army of M. de Bonchamp, a

young woman became a dragoon, to avenge the death of her father; and performed prodigies of valour during the whole war, under the name of *L'Angevin*. She is the only one of these heroines now alive.

I one day saw a young woman, tall and beautiful, with pistols and a sabre hung at her girdle, come to Chollet, accompanied by two other women, armed with pikes. She was brought as a spy to my father, who interrogated her. She told him she was from the parish of *Tout-le-Monde*, and that the women kept guard there when the men were absent in the army. But I do not believe there were in all ten women bearing arms, disguised as men; but it was apparently to authorize in some degree their massacres of women, that the Blues spake so much of those that fought. It is true, that, after their defeats, those who fled were sometimes seized and knocked in the head by the women and children of the villages, which was a shocking reprisal; but the burnings and massacres had given the people a deep feeling of revenge.

It has been also falsely asserted, that the priests fought; but they came to the field of battle only to confess the dying, which they did in the hottest fire; and it was true their bodies were occasionally found. They at times carried pistols for their personal defence; but none of them ever thought of any other duty, except exhorting and rallying the soldiers, or inspiring them with courage and resignation under sufferings. Had the peasants seen them depart from their holy character, they would have lost all veneration for them. So decided was the general opinion in this respect, that

M. du Soulier, who had long fought in the Vendéen army, having been discovered to be a priest, (sous-diacre), was sent to prison. The priests have also been reproached with having excited the Vendéens to cruelty. Nothing could be more false; for, on the contrary, I could produce many traits of courageous humanity, highly honourable to them. Numbers owed their lives to their intercessions with furious soldiers bent on slaughter. The priests who were the most active in exciting the peasants to fight courageously, were often also the most zealous in preventing their shedding the blood of the vanquished. M. Doussis, curate of St Marie-de-Rhé, a most ardent follower of the army, prevented the massacre of a great number of prisoners by his feeling and eloquent expostulations. Some years afterwards, being brought before a republican tribunal, this action saved him.

M. de Supiaud, a venerable missionary of St Esprit, placed himself on another occasion before the door of the prison of St Laurence, declaring they should trample over his body before they reached the prisoners within. The stories circulated respecting the sanguinary fanaticism of the Vendéen priests, are the calumnies of party spirit and irreligion. There were some children in the army; and a little boy of seven years old has been known to stand the fire undauntedly.

The numerous army commanded by General Santerre, which came from Saumur, and had repulsed Stofflet before Doué, arrived at Coron. The principal generals of the grand army were absent, defending other points; and MM. de Bonchamp, de la Rochejaquelein, and Stofflet, being wounded, there was a want of officers as well as

soldiers to stop his march. On the 14th of September, MM. de Talmont and de Perault, with a slender force, very imprudently attacked him. M. de Sepeaux and some young officers having defied each other who should approach nearest to the Blues, advanced too far, and were obliged to return at full gallop. This incident alarmed the peasants, and the attack failed, but without any material loss. Fortunately, M. de Piron succeeded in assembling troops on the side of Chollet; and M. de la Rochejaquelein, who was confined at St Aubin with his wound, employed himself with M. Jagault, in collecting peasants from the surrounding parishes, and sent them to M. de Piron under the command of M. de Laugreniere; he was nearly the only distinguished officer remaining in that district, all the others being with the generals near Mortagne, where the danger was most urgent.

M. de Piron opposed Santerre at the head of 10,000 or 12,000 men; the Blues marched from Coron upon Vezins; and their army, 40,000 strong, the most part from *levées en masse*, occupied a line of four leagues along the great road. M. de Piron, observing the error of this disposition, attacked with vigour the centre of the republicans; and, after an hour and a half's fighting, succeeded in cutting their line, and throwing them into disorder. Their artillery filing off at that moment, through a long and narrow street of Coron, M. de Piron instantly secured it, by placing troops at each end of the village, and the rout became complete. The enemy were followed for four miles, and lost eighteen cannon, and their waggons. This victory did infinite honour to M. de

Piron, who showed great ability and resolution, in a situation where he had no assistance to expect. The soldiers shouted during the battle, "Vive Piron! Vive Piron!"*

He sent immediately after, a part of his infantry, and all his cavalry, to the Chevalier Duhoux, who, with MM. Cadi and Dessorinières, were endeavouring to defend themselves against the republican army, which had come by Angers and the bridges of Cé. A General Dehoux, uncle of the Chevalier, commanded it. The Vendéens, encouraged by the success of M. de Piron, and the reinforcements he had sent, resumed the offensive, and repulsed with spirit the vanguard of the republicans, which fell back behind the river Luçon, by the bridge of Barré.

This bridge was strongly defended by artillery, which stopped the Vendéens. A quarter of a mile further, another bridge had been broken down.

A column of peasants, without officers, flew of themselves to this point. Jean Bernier, a young miller, of the parish of St Lambert, darting from the ranks, threw himself into the stream, and swam across. Others followed;—they repaired the bridge, and the column passed over. Bernier, seizing a standard, called out, "Follow *me*, friends!" They soon overtook the rear of the republican army, cooped up in a defile. Surprised at this unexpected attack, and finding our troops had succeeded in passing the bridge of Barré, the Blues took to flight, abandoning all their artillery, and were pursued as far as the bridges of Cé. The

* Piron for ever.

republicans reproached their general Duhoux with having secret correspondence with his nephew, who commanded the Vendéens; but there was no foundation for this. The Chevalier Duhoux, a young man of twenty, very brave, but very thoughtless, was not of a character to employ such means; and treachery was without example in our civil war.

Thus all the attacks made from Thouars, Saumur, and Angers, were repulsed, and the *levées en masse* on these three sides were dispersed; but meanwhile the whole Basse Vendée was overrun. Unfortunately M. de Charrette had not been able to stop the progress of the former garrison of Mayence, now sent against us from Nantes. The coalesced powers neglecting even to stipulate in the capitulations, that the garrisons should not fight against us, was a cruel circumstance for the Vendéens, and evinced but too well that they did not serve the same cause.

The Mayençais, to the amount of fourteen thousand men, with the troops General Beysser had at Nantes, and a division from Sables, attacked at once by three different routes the insurgents of Bas-Poitou.

The small corps of Jolly, Savin, Coëtus, and Chouppes, were obliged to fall back on Lêgé, where M. de Charrette was. The whole population, old men, women, and children, followed the soldiers, to avoid the general massacre. The crowd of cattle, carriages, &c. encumbered and retarded the retreat; the disorder was extreme, and terror increased at every step. M. de Charrette abandoned Lêgé to retire to Montaigu, and was there attacked and defeated. He then took refuge at Clis-

son, but could not hold out; and lastly, retired to Tiffauges, after having lost the whole territory in which he had hitherto carried on the war. He sent for assistance from the grand army: the fate of La Vendée hung upon that moment.

A few days before the battle of Torfou, a deputation from the army of Mayence, composed of one officer and two subalterns, came to Boulaye, disguised as peasants. They offered to join the royalists, but demanded the high pay of thirty *sols* a day for each soldier, besides a very large sum for the officers, amounting from one to two millions. The Vendéen chiefs had no currency, but promised largely for the future. This did not satisfy the Mayençais, who appeared determined to conclude nothing without the *effective*. This was little regretted; for what confidence could be placed in men who were thus for sale! A larger sum would have led them to betray the Vendéens in their turn. The particulars they gave respecting the strength of their army, and of its position, of which they boasted much, were highly instrumental to the success at the battle of Torfou.

The army and all the generals, except M. de la Rochejaquelein, whose wound still confined him, assembled at Chollet. The enormities committed by the Blues had excited universal horror and indignation, and all the chiefs were resolved to die or conquer in the approaching battle. They decided that no prisoners should be spared, the Mayençais being considered as having violated a capitulation in which La Vendée was to be regarded as a party, being allies of the foreign powers, and troops of the King of France. The cry of "Rendez-vous, grâce," (surrender, you shall have your life,) was therefore

forbidden. Before their departure, the curate of St Laud celebrated mass at midnight, and delivered an impressive sermon. He then solemnly blessed a white standard which I had embroidered for the army of M. de Lescure.

The united armies amounted to about forty thousand men. On the 19th of September, the very day on which the Chevalier Duhoux gained the victory at Beaulieu, they marched against the enemy. The Mayençais had removed from Clisson to Torfou. They at first occupied the village of Boussay, driving from it a small number of Vendéens, who made no resistance, and then advanced on Torfou, placing two battalions in front of the village. At the first fire the Vendéens took to flight, particularly the soldiers of M. de Charrette, who had been discouraged by their reverses. On this, M. de Lescure, dismounting from his horse, with some of his officers, called out, "Are there four hundred men brave enough to die with me?" The people of the parish of Echaubroignes, who had that day seventeen hundred men under arms, answered loudly, "Yes, Marquis, we will follow wherever you lead." These brave peasants, and those of the neighbouring parishes, were the best soldiers in his army; they bore the name of grenadiers of La Vendée, and were commanded by Bourasseau, one of their own comrades. At the head of three thousand men M. de Lescure succeeded in maintaining the battle for two hours. This part of the country, the most unequal and woody of the Bocage, did not allow the Mayençais to observe how weak a force was opposed to them, before M. de Bonchamp's division arrived, and M. de Charrette and the other chiefs had succeeded in rallying those who had fled in the first onset. They

then spread themselves around the left of the republicans, whilst the hedges and inequality of the ground, concealing their motions, prevented the enemy knowing on what point to defend themselves. At last a heavy fire on their rear, near which the artillery was placed, made them fear its loss; and the movement they made to defend it threw them suddenly into disorder. Their columns became entangled in deep and intricate roads, exposed to the desultory fire of the Vendéens. They could not even save their cannon, and the soldiers who defended them were killed. General Kleber, who commanded the Mayençais, preserving his coolness and judgement, prevented a complete rout, and reestablished some degree of order in his army. The courage of their officers, and steadiness of their soldiers, would scarcely have saved them, had not Kleber, after a retreat of about a league, perceiving the disorder of his troops, and pressed by the Vendéens, placed two pieces of cannon on the bridge of Boussay, and said to a lieutenant-colonel, "You and your battalion must die here!"—"Yes, General!" replied this brave man; and he perished on the spot. This allowed Kleber time to rally the Mayençais, so as to stop the career of the Vendéens, who proceeded no further.

The next day MM. de Charrette and de Lescure attacked General Beysser at Montaigu, to prevent his junction with the Mayençais. Although taken by surprise, he at first made some resistance. The troops of M. de Charrette behaved ill again; but he rallied them with such spirit that they came back to the charge. The soldiers of the grand army did not give way for an instant, and never had shown themselves braver or more ardent than on this day.

They had acquired confidence in themselves, and the officers experience. General Beysser was completely beaten. His troops were not equal to the Mayençais; they lost their cannon and equipage, and he was himself severely wounded. The panic of the republicans was such, that they could not be rallied nearer than Nantes.

It was agreed, that next day the whole army should attack the Mayençais in their retreat. They had formed considerable magazines of provisions at Clisson, where their wounded were placed, and to which they also wished to remove their booty. Their march being encumbered by a convoy of about 1200 carriages, would have rendered an attack easy, which was to have taken place on the right by MM. d'Elbée and de Bonchamp, and on the left by MM. de Charrette and de Lescure. But, after the taking of Montaigu, M. de Charrette thought it would be better to march immediately towards St Fulgent, and engage the division of Sables coming by that road. It had committed horrible ravages in the country, and the inhabitants had earnestly entreated to be delivered from them. He gained over M. de Lescure to his opinion; and they both thought that the attack upon the right would be sufficient to disperse the Mayençais convoy. They, therefore, sent an officer to M. de Bonchamp, to inform him that they had resolved to march towards St Fulgent; but this messenger did not arrive in time, and this accident had fatal consequences.

The victory was complete at St Fulgent: the army of Charrette showed, at first, some hesitation. Soon overcome by the firmness of the general and officers, the Blues were quickly put to flight, and closely pursued by the cavalry. Avril, a peasant

of high fame in our army, had his arm broken. One of the Swiss, named Rynchs, drew a flageolet from his pocket, and began to play in derision, the air *Cà ira*. While charging the enemy, a ball carried off the head of his horse, but Rynchs getting up again, continued to play. M. de Lescure, le Chevalier de Beauvolliers, and the young de Mondyon, had been so eager in the pursuit, that they found themselves at six in the evening perfectly alone. Four republicans, concealed behind a hedge, fired at them. M. de Lescure, believing that it was his own soldiers, advanced to them, saying, "Do not fire, we are your generals." They fired again close to them. Happily their guns were only loaded with small shot. M. de Lescure's clothes were pierced in very many places, and the Chevalier Mondyon was severely wounded in the hand; the artillery and baggage remained in the possession of the Vendéens. This division of Sables continued the flight to Chantonnay.

Meanwhile MM. d'Elbée, de Bonchamp, de Talmont, &c. supported by the divisions of MM. de Lyrot and of Isigny, attacked the convoy of Clisson. If all the army had been united, and the expectation of the attack upon the left had not been disappointed, it is probable that the formidable Mayençais would have experienced a total destruction; but our success was very incomplete. M. de Bonchamp renewed the attack three times with heroic courage, but was repulsed; and though his loss was not great, and he took 100 waggons, the expedition failed; and it cannot be denied that, if successful, the consequences would have been very important. M. de Bonchamp felt severely his not having been supported; the circumstance began to

sow a little dissension among the different chiefs of the Vendéen armies; and the peasants of Anjou preserved a bitter recollection of it. Six armies, which, almost at the same moment, assailed the Vendéens, were by a great and general effort repulsed. Unfortunately, the most formidable of these armies had suffered the least. Some days of repose became necessary, before undertaking anything new. MM. d'Elbée and de Bonchamp remained near Tiffauges, to watch the Mayençais; MM. de Talmont and de Stofflet occupied Anjou; M. de Charrette was at Herbiers; M. de la Ville de Baugé at Poussauges, to check the troops of Chatsignerais; and M. de Lescure returned to Châtillon, for the safety of that district. General Westermann* arrived from Niorat; and the republican division of Luçon occupied Chantonnay.

The soldiers returned in triumph to their homes, after so many victories; the Te Deum was sung in all the parishes. I assisted at that of Châtillon, where the Chevalier de ——— had it celebrated with extraordinary pomp. He was a great general for processions, assuming, on such occasions, a gravity and devotion which charmed the peasants, who, besides, loved him extremely from

* Westermann, a soldier of fortune, bred in the artillery, commanded the attack on the Tuilleries on the 10th July. In the war of La Vendée he showed much military talent, but also much cruelty, laying waste the country and butchering the inhabitants of both sexes, and all ages. He came to the usual end of the revolutionary leaders, being guillotined as an adherent of Danton, when the latter succumbed under the power of his rival Robespierre. Westermann had sinned grievously against humanity, but not against the republic, which he had served but too well.

the care he took of the wounded. He came at the head of the inhabitants, with the Bishop of Agra, the generals, and the superior council; while M. de Lescure, whose courage had been so conspicuous in the last battle, and whom the whole country hailed as its deliverer, concealed behind a pillar of the church, and avoiding observation, returned thanks to God upon his knees.

In the evening, while I was walking, I heard the cry of "To arms! the prisoners have revolted!" There were 1800 of them in an abbey, and not well secured. Two loaded cannon were before the gate, but not properly attended. Fearing they might surprise the staff-officers, who were near, I ran there in time. Snatching up their swords, they flew to the prison; but it was a false alarm, and such were frequently given. Sometimes there were many more prisoners than soldiers in the town; and there had been a revolt, in which they were obliged to fire upon the mutineers. Another time two prisoners, after requesting to serve in the army and take the oath to the King, were detected endeavouring to open the doors of the prison, and shot in consequence. Hearing of the massacre of our prisoners by the Blues, it had been more than once considered whether we should not retaliate; but this cruel proposal was always repelled with horror. At first the republicans had spared a part of their prisoners, and only detained them. The most distinguished were indeed executed; but there had not been yet a general proscription, as at this period.

Two days after the separation of the armies, M. de Charrette sent an officer from Herbiers to Châtillon to claim his share of seven thousand

francs in assignats, which had been taken at St Fulgent. This demand could admit of no difficulty. M. de Lescure had agreed with M. de Charrette, before parting, that they should make another attack in concert, after a little repose. The grand army had saved him, and it was just that he should now assist them. Chantonnay and Châtaigneraie were occupied by the enemy. This last post, in particular, being far advanced in the Bocage, gave great uneasiness; and M. de Lescure was anxious that their efforts should be directed upon that point. One of the MM. de la Roberie, who had come in the name of M. de Charrette, said, from him, that he thought they ought first to attack Chantonnay. M. de Lescure and his officers wrote to M. de Charrette, that they considered it as a duty to submit to his opinion, and, however inclined to give the preference to the attack of Châtaigneraie, they confided entirely in his talents and experience, and said they would be the next day at Herbiers with their army. I saw the letter. It was signed by MM. de Lescure, de Beauvolliers, de Desessarts, and de Baugé, the only chiefs who were at Châtillon. The next day we were surprised to learn that M. de Charrette had left Herbiers, and gone to Mortagne, where he demanded a share of booty taken at St Fulgent. My father was not there, being near Tiffauges with MM. de Bonchamp and d'Elbée. M. de Charrette, therefore, only found M. de Marigny, who, having already distributed to the soldiers, the shoes, vests, &c., M. de Charrette could not have his share of them, but which, at any rate, would have been small, as the booty of this kind was not very valuable. M. de Charrette

showed himself very much dissatisfied, and retired suddenly, and without acquainting anybody with his intentions, into his former position in Lège, when he ought to have considered that his own fate depended upon that of our army.

This retreat changed all the plans, as no chief had now sufficient force to act on the offensive. M. de Lescure appeared before Châtaigneraie without attacking it, limiting himself to some skirmishes to confine the enemy; but, learning that General Westermann was marching upon Châtillon, he returned to the position of St Sauveur. This did not prevent the Blues occupying Bressuire; they did not advance beyond it, but once or twice there were some slight rencounters. M. de Lescure made a night attack on Bressuire, which, though not attended with marked success, checked the republicans.

I was at this period in great affliction. My mother was ill of a malignant fever, and, whilst I attended her at Boulaye, I learned that M. de Lescure was at Châtillon. He sent a letter to my father, who was at Mortagne. The messenger having orders to follow him wherever he might be, my fears were excited to such a degree, as to induce me to open the letter, in which M. de Lescure asked for reinforcements and ammunition, and said he expected to be attacked by Westermann. I resealed the dispatches, forwarded the courier, and then instantly set out to see M. de Lescure, and tell him all my alarms. I returned the same night to my mother, and he to St Sauveur.

CHAPTER XIII.

BATTLE OF MOULIN AUX CHEVRES—RECAPTURE OF CHATILLON—BATTLES OF LA TREMBLAYE AND CHOLLET.

THE republican armies pressed every day more and more upon the insurgents, and advanced further into the Bocage. The divisions of Chantonnay, Châtaigneraie and Bressuire, made a junction, occupied Cérizais, burning the castle of Puyguyon near them, which belonged to M. de Lescure. Châtillon and Boulaye no longer affording safety, my mother, with swelled legs, and scarcely recovered, was put on horseback, where she had not been for twenty years; and we set out for Chollet with my aunt the abbess, and my little daughter, whom we had been obliged to wean at nine months old, sorrow and anxiety having dried up the nurse's milk. We began this journey on a stormy night, in the rain.

My father was at Chollet, employed in collecting troops to send to the points menaced by the enemy. They were the most necessary where M. de Lescure was placed. MM. d'Elbée and de Bonchamp were still at Clisson, in front of the Mayençais, who had not yet resumed the offensive. M. de Lescure fell back from St Sauveur to Châtillon. He had only three or four thousand men, while the Blues had more than twenty thousand at Bressuire, and it was evident they would

soon attack. M. de la Rochejaquelein, wounded as he was, joined M. de Lescure; they sent repeatedly to my father for assistance. The peasants around Châtaigneraie, Cérizais, and Bressuire, could not at that moment be reckoned upon, being occupied in saving their families, their cattle, and effects, from the burnings and general destruction, by carrying them farther into the country. M. de Talmont, confined at Chollet by the gout, believed, as some others did, that M. d'Elbée stood more in want of assistance than M. de Lescure. The discussion of this question, which my father could only terminate by exercising his authority, delayed the march of the troops to Bressuire so long, that several officers, and among others, M. des Sorinières, who brought a fine corps of two thousand men, did not arrive till the end of the battle.

The republicans attacked M. de Lescure at the Moulin aux Chèvres. They had such superiority of numbers, that they seized that position, and put the Vendéens to flight; who would have suffered much, had not MM. de Lescure and de la Rochejaquelein, by naming themselves, attracted the attention of the enemy's hussars, who, by pursuing them for two hours, gave time for the soldiers to escape by different roads. M. de Stofflet, who had come from Anjou, as well as the Chevalier de Beauvolliers, were very nearly taken in a hollow way; but escaped by standing on their saddles, and leaping over a hedge. Some soldiers pursued them, but M. de Beauvolliers killing two with his pistols, and then drawing his sabre, the rest fled.

M. Durivault was severely wounded by a ball

which grazed his breast, and M. de Lescure had his thumb hurt. A M. de ———, Chevalier de St Louis, who proposed plans, talked of forming a corps of Maréchaussée, and who in everything affected the man of importance, had, till this time, always found means to escape fighting. He had come to pass the summer at the waters of Johannet, which his physicians had prescribed, he said, for one and twenty years. M. de Sorinières had, I know not how, succeeded in bringing him that day to the army; but when he saw our people take flight, he ran away shamefully himself, calling out, "Courage, my friends!—turn and rally,—but let me pass you!"

Châtillon was taken the same day; and the brave villages of Aubiers, St Aubin, Nueil, Rorthais, &c. &c., were sacked and burnt.

The generals returned to us at Chollet; and the peasant who had carried my standard, came and showed me its pole, all jagged with sabre cuts. He had fought singly with a Blue, and defended himself with the lance of the standard.

MM. de Bonchamp and d'Elbée had not quitted their position, and sent many earnest entreaties to M. de Charrette, that he would attack the Mayençais; but he did not answer their letters. Perhaps he did not receive them all. Of whatever importance, however, their position might be, it was still more urgent to unite all the forces, and recapture Châtillon. The wounded, the prisoners, and the ammunition, were removed from Mortagne to Beaupréau. I went there also with my mother, my aunt, my child, and M. Durivault, whom M. de Lescure had desired me to take as much care of as I would of his brother. We found

on our arrival, Madame d'Elbée, whose brother M. Duhoux d'Hautrive, commanded the town.

The army was quickly assembled, and marched upon Châtillon, two days after the battle of Moulin aux Chèvres. The ardour of the soldiers was extreme; and all the officers whose wounds would allow them to mount on horseback, joined the troops, as did also MM. Bonchamp, de la Rochejaquelein, and Duchaffault, with their arms in slings. The town was soon carried, and the republicans entirely routed. They lost all their cannon and baggage, and were pursued with fury. Never was there a more murderous engagement for our enemies. M. Duchaffault distinguished himself much in this battle. He belonged to the army of Charrette, but had come voluntarily, just before the engagement. He was wounded, and remained with us, as also his younger brother, a boy of fifteen, full of ardour. Their father had emigrated with two elder sons.

This victory was complete, and the enemy was pursued in all directions. M. de Lescure and the greatest part of the chiefs followed them by the road of St Aubin; M. Girard de Beaurepaire, the brave Lejeay, a peasant from the parish of Chanzo, captain of cavalry, and some others, proceeded by the road of Bressuire. General Westermann had fled; but seeing himself pursued by so small a detachment, he stopped, repulsed vigorously our dragoons, and conceived the bold project of returning to Châtillon. He ordered a hundred hussars to take each of them a grenadier behind and follow him, reaching thus in the night the gates of the town, where there were neither guards nor sentinels. The peasants, having found brandy, were

for the most part drunk. The dragoons who had at first pursued Westermann endeavoured to stop him, and fought courageously. M. Girard de Beaurepaire fell, after receiving twelve sabre wounds. Lejeay lost his horse. He then ran to the hospital where his wounded brother lay, and, taking him in his arms, he placed him behind a dragoon who was flying from the town; returned to the engagement, killed a hussar, mounted his horse, and continued to fight. But Westermann had already entered the town, and was fighting in the streets, where a horrible slaughter began. The hussars were almost as drunk as our people, and the darkness of the night added to the horror and confusion. The Blues massacred women and children in the houses, and set fire to every thing. The Vendéen officers dispatched numbers of them, who were themselves so intent on killing as not to think of their own defence. The brave Loizeau received many sabre wounds, but he killed three republicans. The Prince of Talmont, coming out of a house, was thrown down by some hussars, who did him no other injury, but went in and massacred his landlady and her daughter, who were in reality democrats. Many other women, wives of the republican soldiers, were involved in the promiscuous slaughter. In four or five hours Westermann withdrew, but darkness prevented his being pursued. The Vendéens durst not hazard any movement. The chiefs who were without the town waited for day to re-enter it; and it was then the horrors of the night were displayed. Houses on fire; streets strewn with dead bodies; wounded men, women, and children; with wrecks of every species.

The victorious Vendéens left this miserable town.

They had to meet more formidable foes in another quarter.

The Mayençais, after their junction with all the divisions of the west, had occupied Mortagne the 14th of October, the troops of M. de Royrand retreating before them. They then marched upon Chollet. M. de Lescure had desired us to remove from Beaupréau to Vizins; but M. Durivault was too ill to accompany us. We were bewildered in the cross-roads, but arrived at Trémentine on the evening of the 15th. That day the Vendéens were to have attacked the republicans at Chollet, where they expected them to be by that time.

On the day preceding, M. de Bonchamp by the road of Tiffauges, and M. de Lescure by that of Mortagne, were to take a position in the rear of the army; but it marched slower than they expected, and M. de Lescure met it in the avenues of the Chateau de la Tremblaye, half way between Mortagne and Chollet. M. de Bonchamp, finding nobody at Chollet, could not join the other divisions in time.

M. de Lescure, with the young Beauvolliers, was some way before the troops, when, reaching the top of a rising ground, he discovered, at twenty paces from him, a republican post. "Forward!" he called out to the troops; but at that moment a ball struck him above the left eye, and came out behind his ear;—he fell lifeless. The peasants having rushed forward, passed over the body of their general without seeing him, and speedily repulsed the republicans. Young Beauvolliers, however, throwing away his sword, called out, weeping, "He is dead, he is dead!" * This alarm diffusing itself among the Vendéens, and occasioning some confu-

sion, a reserve of Mayençais returned upon them, and put them to flight. Meantime a servant of M. de Lescure had found his master bathed in blood, but still breathing. He placed him on a horse, supported by two soldiers; and in this manner they miraculously accomplished the conveying him to Beaupréau among the routed troops. The Vendéens retired to Chollet; and as they did not see M. de Lescure again, they believed him dead.

We had slept at Trémentine; and on the morning of the 16th I went to church, where I found a number of women kneeling in prayer, having heard the sound of cannon from Chollet. Some of the fugitive troops arrived. I saw M. de Perault, who approached, took me by the hand, and wept; but perceiving, by my countenance, that I knew nothing, said it was for the loss of the battle. I asked where M. de Lescure was; and he replied, at Beaupréau. He did not know that he was alive, but had not courage to tell me of his death. He advised me to return to Beaupréau, as the hussars might every instant be expected at Trémentine. No oxen could be found for the carriage to convey my poor old aunt; but, terrified to death, I could not wait. Taking my daughter in my arms, I set out on horseback, accompanied by my mother. We stopped at Chemillé, where my aunt overtook us; but scarcely was she arrived, when we were obliged to proceed; and we resumed our journey, having first placed my daughter in the carriage.

A moment after, we heard the cry of "The Blues are coming!—fly!" Terror seized me, and I galloped off; but the road being crowded with carriages, I got upon a side-path, about two feet above the road. Finding it rose higher and higher, I made

my horse leap down among the carts, and I clambered over the other side of the road into a field, that I might reach the head of the column. A moment after, I regained my presence of mind, and rejoined my family. There had not been, in fact, any danger; but some Vendéen artillerymen had, in order to clear the road for their pieces, sounded this alarm. We continued our journey by cross-roads; and, instead of arriving at Beaupréau, we found ourselves by night at the village of Boze, a league and a half from the Loire, and in front of Mont-Jean. We threw ourselves on a bed, in a room full of soldiers, who were on their way to join the army of M. de Bonchamp. At three in the morning of the 17th of October, we were awakened by the noise of cannon. It was heard at once from the quarter of St Florent and from Mont-Jean, along the Loire. Every one rose to attend the high mass, which was to be celebrated by the curate during the night, that the peasants might proceed early in the morning for the army. We accompanied them, and found the church full. The curate, who was a good old man, of venerable appearance, exhorted the soldiers in the most affecting manner. He conjured them to defend their God, their King, their wives, and their children! The roar of cannon was heard at intervals during this discourse; the scene around, and the uncertainty in which we were as to the fate of the army, or of those most dear to us, heightened by the obscurity of night, made a profound and awful impression! The curate finished, by giving absolution to those poor people who were going to battle.

After mass, I wished to confess. They had told the curate, that M. de Lescure was dead; and not

knowing how to communicate this dreadful misfortune, entreated him to prepare me for it. This old man spake to me with extreme kindness, carefully avoiding to overwhelm me by a sudden blow. He praised the virtues and piety of M. de Lescure, and said I should feel deep gratitude to God for having bestowed upon me such a husband; but that higher duties were imposed upon me in consequence; that M. de Lescure might be called to his God; and that if Providence, in its infinite wisdom, should try me with severe afflictions, I ought to be resigned to Heaven, and think only of the recompense which there awaited me.

His tone and voice, rising by degrees, seemed prophetic! Frozen with terror, I looked at him, without knowing what to think. During this time, the noise of cannon redoubled; and the peals seeming to approach nearer and nearer, obliged us to leave the church; and while I was almost senseless, they put me on horseback, and we fled, but without knowing where to find shelter.

At a league from Boze, M. Jagault met some people, who told him M. de Lescure was at Chaudron, and was wounded. I then learned what they had believed, and concealed from me. We were not far from Chaudron, and I flew there, where I found M. de Lescure in a dreadful state. His head was all shattered, and his face so terribly swelled, that he could hardly speak. My arrival relieved him from the most terrible apprehensions; for he had sent three different messengers, who neither met, nor could gain any intelligence of me; and he imagined I had fallen into the hands of the republicans. Chaudron was full of the fugitives and the wounded. I again met here M. Durivault.

The Vendéens, after the defeat of Tremblaye, returned to Chollet, from whence they marched during the night to Beaupréau, for the purpose of rallying there. Some chiefs, among others M. de la Rochejaquelein, wished them to remain, and defend Chollet, which was a good position; but the soldiers were so unwilling, that only some cavalry and horse-artillery were left, with which they were enabled, on the morning of the 16th, to make some show of defence, in order to allow the army time to rally at Beaupréau. This was the cannon we heard at Trémentine; and when I saw M. de Perault, he was on his way from Chollet to join the army. The republicans entered Chollet with extreme precaution, and advanced no further that day.

The generals assembled at Beaupréau, resolved to make a last effort to expel the republicans. They might still hope for success, as their army was numerous, and the soldiers animated by the desire of vengeance, and the necessity of conquering. M. de Bonchamp, however, foreseeing the possibility of failure, proposed sending a detachment to take Varades, situated on the right bank of the Loire, that the army might have a place of retreat in case of defeat. He had always thought there would have been great advantages in carrying on the war upon the right bank of the Loire. He was acquainted with Brittany, and was convinced the people would join the Vendéens: this plan, therefore, did not appear so difficult to him as to the other chiefs of the country.

Had he lived, and had he taken the command of the army, the insurgents might perhaps have reaped great advantage from an event that proved

their ruin. He died without any one knowing his schemes, his correspondents, or the measures he relied on for success; and this enterprise of Varades became evidently injurious. It removed from the army officers who would have been useful in deciding the day; gave the soldiers an idea the battle might be lost, and showed them a means of retreat. Many chiefs thought that, even after the defeat, they ought not to have quitted the left bank, as they might again have been able to collect a large army, particularly of the Poitevins, who were dispersed behind the republicans; and that they might have also succeeded in prevailing on M. de Charrette to make a diversion in their favour.

MM. de Talmont, d'Autichamp, and Duhoux, were then sent at the head of four thousand Bretons or Angevins, the whole of these almost from the right bank, to pass the Loire at St Florent, and occupy Varades. The cannon we heard at Boze proceeded from this attack, and those we heard on the side of Mont-Jean, were from an attempt the Blues had made there; but they reimbarked on perceiving our attack of Varades.

On the 17th, in the morning, MM. d'Elbée, de Bonchamp, de la Rochejaquelein, de Royrand, my father, and all the other chiefs, marched upon Chollet, at the head of forty thousand men. The republicans had made their junction with the divisions of Bressuire, and were forty-five thousand strong. It was upon the ground before Chollet, on the side of Beaupréau, that the armies met. MM. de la Rochejaquelein and Stofflet led on a furious attack. For the first time the Vendéens marched in close columns, like troops of the line.

They broke in upon the centre of the enemy, and penetrated as far as the faubourgs of Chollet. General Beaupuy, who commanded the republicans, was twice thrown from his horse in endeavouring to rally his soldiers, and was nearly taken. Disorder was spreading among the Blues, when a reserve of Mayençais arrived. The Vendéens supported the first shock, and repulsed them; but by repeated attacks they were at last thrown into disorder. All our chiefs performed prodigies of valour to recover the day, and succeeded in rallying some soldiers, who fought with such fury, as made the victory be very dearly purchased. MM. d'Elbée and Bonchamp were mortally wounded. The rout became general, although protected in their flight by the arrival of M. de Piron, with a great part of M. de Lyrot's division, which allowed them to carry off their wounded. The republicans had also suffered too much to think of pursuing. They returned to Chollet; set fire to the town; and abandoned themselves during the night to all their accustomed atrocities.

MM. d'Elbée and Bonchamp were transported at first to Beaupréau, and M. d'Elbée remained there; M. de Bonchamp was carried afterwards to St Florent, where the wrecks of the Vendéen army assembled. A rear-guard was left at Beaupréau, which made some defence; but Westermann carried it on the 18th, burnt the town, and all the neighbouring villages, but did not advance further.

CHAPTER XIV.

PASSAGE OF THE LOIRE—MARCH BY INGRANDE—CANDE, CHATEAU-GONTIER, AND LAVAL.

I WAS at this dreadful period too much overcome by grief and apprehension, for the passing events to leave any distinct impression on my memory. Many of the details have been related to me since.

MM. de Talmont and d'Autichamp had succeeded in their attack upon Varades; they had driven away the Blues, and the passage of the Loire was secured. From the 17th, a crowd of soldiers had fled, without stopping, as far as St Florent. During the whole night the Vendéens marched upon this point.

Our *Breton* soldiers,* and the people of the right bank, had brought some boats. They called to the fugitives, "*Come, friends, come to our country, you shall want for nothing; we will help you; we are all aristocrats.*" The Vendéens precipitated themselves in crowds into the boats.

Thus when, on the morning of the 18th, the officers arrived, the passage was begun. We had left Chaudron during the night. M. de Lescure was carried on a bed, which they had covered as well as they possibly could; he suffered dreadfully.

* The soldiers of Brittany.

I travelled by his side. I was three months gone with child; my situation was shocking. We arrived early at St Florent, and then I saw the greatest and the saddest sight which can be imagined; a sight which never can be effaced from the memory of the wretched Vendéens.

The heights of St Florent form a kind of semi-circular boundary to a vast level strand reaching to the Loire, which is very wide at this place. Eighty thousand people were crowded together in this valley; soldiers, women, children, the aged, and the wounded, flying from immediate destruction. Behind them, they perceived the smoke rising from the villages the republicans were burning. Nothing was heard but loud sobs, groans, and cries. In this confused crowd, every one sought his relations, his friends, and his protectors. They knew not what fate they should meet on the other shore, yet hastened to it, as if beyond the stream they were to find an end to all their misfortunes. Twenty bad boats carried successively the fugitives, who crowded in them; others tried to cross on horses; all spread out their arms towards the other side, supplicating to be taken there. At a distance on the opposite shore, another multitude was seen and heard fainter. In the middle was a small island covered with people. Many of us compared this disorder, this despair, this terrible uncertainty of the future, this immense spectacle, this bewildered crowd, this valley, this stream which must be crossed, to the ideas of the Last Judgement.

When the officers saw this eagerness to quit the left bank, and that passing the Loire was become necessary by this disorderly movement of the whole army, they gave themselves up to despair. M. de

la Rochejaquelein was like a madman; he would remain on the shore, and let himself be killed by the Blues. It was in vain represented to him that he must yield to the torrent; that it was impossible to reanimate the courage of the soldiers, and lead them to battle; that this was the only method of saving all these people. He listened to nothing. He went with a great number of officers to M. de Lescure, who had been taken to a house at St Florent, and related to him with tears of anger what had passed. M. de Lescure was again reanimated, and declared that he too would die in La Vendée. But they represented to him his situation: he could not stand. They described to him the situation of the army, of which a part was already over, and which certainly could not be persuaded to return; spoke of the crowd of wounded, of women, children, and old people; of the republican army which was advancing every moment, and of the flames, which drew nearer and nearer. They observed to him that there was no ammunition left, nor any means of defence. At last he yielded, finding it impossible to resist, and consented to be carried over to the other side.

A few officers who had, or who thought they had, influence on the right bank, were the only ones who saw without grief this passage of the Loire. M. de Bonchamp, who had advised and prepared it, was insensible;—he was dying.

They had brought to St Florent five thousand republican prisoners. M. Cesbrons d'Argognes, an old chevalier de St Louis, and commandant of Chollet, had conducted them. He was a severe man, and had nine of them shot on the road for trying to escape. However, they could not be

dragged further, nor taken across the river. The officers deliberated on the fate of these prisoners. I was present; M. de Lescure was lying on a mattress, and I was attending him. At first they were all for shooting them immediately. M. de Lescure said to me with a weak voice, and which was scarce heard, "How barbarous!"—But when the order was to be given to execute these poor wretches, nobody would do it. One said, this horrid butchery was too much for him; another, that he would not be an executioner; some added, that it would be atrocious to retaliate on poor people, who, having been prisoners for four months, had nothing to do with the crimes of the republicans. It was said that it would be authorizing the massacres of the Blues; that it would redouble their cruelty; and that they would not leave a single living creature on the left bank. At last it was decided to give them their liberty. Some of them have since shown their gratitude, by saving Madame de Bonchamp at Nantes. They signed a certificate, which attested that M. de Bonchamp, in compliance with the entreaties of his wife, had obtained their lives from the Vendéen army. The fact was, Madame de Bonchamp had not seen her husband since. It was true, however, that the prisoners owed her particular gratitude. She had met in the square M. d'Argognes, who was inciting the soldiers to massacre the prisoners; and by her reproaches she had forced him to desist.

We were preparing to cross over. M. de Lescure was wrapped up in his bed-clothes, and he was put on an arm-chair covered with a kind of mattress. We descended from St Florent to the shore in the middle of the crowd. Many officers accom-

panied us. They drew their sabres, made a circle around us, and we arrived at the edge of the water. We found the old Madame de Meynard, who had broken her leg in coming to St Florent; her daughter was by her side, and begged me to receive them in our boat. M. de Lescure was put in. M. Durivault, my little girl, my father, our servants, and I, got into the boat. It could not hold Madame de Meynard's litter; and her daughter would not leave her:—they both remained. We did not find my mother; she was on horseback, and had forded the river to the little island, which was not far from the left bank. She ran very great risks, and caused us dreadful uneasiness for a long time; for we did not see her again till we reached Varades.

When we were embarked, my father told the boatman who conducted us, to pass the little island, and go to Varades at once without stopping, to save M. de Lescure the pain of being landed and put in the boat again. The man refused absolutely; neither entreaties nor threats could induce him. My father was angry, and drew his sabre. "Alas! Sir," said the boatman to him, "I am a poor priest; out of charity I came to ferry the Vendéens over. I have now been working eight hours in this boat; I am overpowered with fatigue, and I am not skilful in this business; I should run a risk of drowning you if I crossed the great arm of the river." We were then obliged to land on the island, in the middle of the confusion. We found a boat there which took us to the other side, where there were a number of Vendéens seated on the grass, all waiting for their friends. My father went in search of my mother. I sent to a half-burnt hamlet on the edge of the Loire for some milk for my child.

Varades is a quarter of a league distant, on the side of a hill. M. de Lescure was impatient to arrive there. The weather was clear, but the wind was cold. They placed two pikes under the arm-chair, and the soldiers carried it. My femme-de-chambre and myself supported his feet, wrapped up in napkins. M. Durivault followed us with difficulty.

We were thus advancing, when a young man on horseback passed near us, and stopped a moment. It was M. d'Autichamp. I had not seen him since he left Paris. He told us he was going to assemble three thousand men to attack Ancenis, and secure a ford for our artillery. He tried to calm a little the despair in which he saw me.

An instant after, I heard in Varades the cry To arms!—and soon after the noise of drums and musketry began. I had never found myself so near a battle; and what a moment to be attacked! I stopped quite terrified. The firing reanimated M. de Lescure, who was almost insensible. He asked what it was. I entreated him to let himself be carried to a neighbouring wood. He answered, that the Blues would do him a service, by dispatching him, and that the balls would hurt him less than the cold and wind. I did not listen to him; he was carried into the wood; my child was brought after me, and many other people took refuge in it.

At the end of an hour, we heard all was quiet. A detachment of hussars had appeared before Varades, without knowing it was occupied, and had retired as quickly as possible. We continued our route, and we arrived in the town. As I entered it, a peasant, whom I did not know, came to me, and pressing my hand, said, "We have left our

country, we are now all brothers and sisters; we must not separate. I will defend you till death, and we will perish together." They gave me a little room for M. de Lescure: my father, my mother, and my aunt, joined us. The house, like all those of Varades, was filled with fugitives, who knew not what was to become of them. Many suffered from hunger; but the greatest part of these worthy people were so little inclined to plunder, that there were some in our house who would not take potatoes out of the garden, as I advised them to do, till the master of the house had permitted them. M. d'Autichamp found the Vendéens masters of Ancenis. The army of M. de Lyrot, after having forded the river before the town, had courageously attacked and carried it. It was there that the cannon and *caissons* were passed, and also the cattle.

They had all passed over during the night. Some slept on mattresses, some on straw; but the greatest number bivouacked. M. de Bonchamp was dead when he was taken out of the boat, and was buried the next day. Some days after, the republicans took his body up, to cut off the head and send it to the Convention. Nobody knew what was become of M. d'Elbée; the army was without a commander-in-chief. M. de Lescure sent for the principal officers of the different divisions, and told them they must elect one. They answered, that it was evidently he who was general, and that he must command when he recovered. "Gentlemen," said he, "I am mortally wounded; but even if I could live, which I do not believe possible, I should be long unable to command. It is necessary that the army should have immediately an active chief, loved by every body, known by the

peasants, and having the confidence of all; it is the only means of saving us. M. de la Rochejaquelein is the only one who has made himself known to the soldiers of all the divisions. M. de Donnissan, my father-in-law, is not of this country; they would not follow him so willingly, and he himself would not wish it. The choice that I propose will reanimate the courage of the Vendéens: I advise you, and I beg you to name M. de la Rochejaquelein. As to me, if I live, you know I shall not quarrel with Henri, I shall be his aide-de-camp."

These gentlemen retired, and formed a council of war, in which M. de la Rochejaquelein was elected. They wanted to name a second in command: M. de la Rochejaquelein answered, that he was that second, as he should follow the advice of M. Donnissan, and look upon him as his superior officer.

M. de la Rochejaquelein, far from desiring this honour, feared it very much, and was sincerely sorry for it. He had represented, that at one-and-twenty he had neither age nor experience enough to give him influence; his youth was in reality his only fault. In battle his valour animated and subjugated the whole army, and they obeyed him blindly; but he neglected the council, and did not attach importance to his own opinion: he told it, without supporting it; and, from too much modesty, let the army be governed by others. When he did not agree with them, he said to the officers who were his friends, "This is all nonsense: when in the battle, it will be our turn to lead, and theirs to follow." Notwithstanding all this, he was the best general they could choose. The peasants fol-

lowed him with alacrity, from the natural ascendancy of his character: His courage and activity were truly inspiring, and he had the art of commanding. My father did not desire to have the difficult employment of conducting a crowd of peasants who did not know him, and who, besides, preferred being led on by young men.

M. de la Rochejaquelein was then proclaimed general, with the acclamations of all the Vendéens. As soon as M. de Lescure knew they had followed his advice, he told me to call Henri. He had hidden himself in a corner, and was weeping bitterly. I brought him: he threw his arms round M. de Lescure's neck; repeated that he was not worthy to be general; that he only knew how to fight; that he was much too young, and that he should never know how to silence those who opposed him. He begged M. de Lescure to take the command again, as soon as he should be recovered. "I never expect it," he answered; "but if it does happen, I will be your aide-de-camp, and help you to conquer that diffidence, which prevents your acting up to the force of your own character, and defeating the intrigues of the ambitious."

They then assembled a council, to deliberate on the course the army should take. M. de Lescure was for marching on Nantes. He thought that a sudden attack on that city, whose garrison had entered La Vendée, might succeed. Besides the importance of the position, it was a means of re-entering our country, and of concerting operations with M. de Charrette's army. There were no news of him; but it appeared probable that our loss might have saved him, by drawing the enemy on us. They talked also of marching upon Rennes.

It was certain that Brittany was ready to rise; and there were fewer obstacles to stop us on that road. The peasants remembered their defeat under the walls of Nantes, which might discourage them. It was decided that they should go to Rennes. The Chevalier de Beauvolliers was sent immediately, with a small advanced guard, to occupy Ingrande. After the council, M. de Lescure, who had been stimulated by the importance of the business, relapsed into a state of greater weakness when it was over, and became almost insensible. Towards evening, the prisoners, whom we had left at liberty at St Florent, picked up some cannon, and fired on Varades. It was returned; but there was no harm done on either side.

The army was to go the next day to Ingrande. It was decided that M. de Lescure was to set out in the evening. A young man in the neighbourhood offered to conceal him, as well as my mother, my aunt, and me;—he answered for the safety of the asylum that he proposed. M. de Lescure would not hear of quitting the army. I was tempted to take advantage of this offer for my child; but the fear that it would be carried to the foundling-hospital, or that they would not take care enough of it, and the hope that she would continue in good health, determined me to keep her. I could not resolve to part with so dear an object; and at that time every one experienced the wish of running common dangers, and of having a common fate.

We set out in the evening. They could not find a carriage for M. de Lescure, and placed him in a cart; but the violent jolting made him suffer so horribly, that he cried out from pain. When

he arrived at Ingrande, he was almost insensible. We stopped in the first house; they gave a bad bed to M. de Lescure; I lay down on some hay; and we had scarce anything to eat. There was such a confusion, that they were obliged to beat the drum to procure a surgeon to dress my husband's wounds. The Chevalier de Beauvolliers came to see us. He had learned, by the letters he had taken at the post-office, that Noirmoutiers had just been surprised by M. de Charrette. The next morning, the main body of the army arrived, and continued its march on Candé and Segré. We did not know how to convey M. de Lescure; he could not bear the motion of the cart. The caleche in which my aunt travelled was too small. I went into the town with MM. de Baugé and de Mondyon. We had a kind of litter, made with an old arm-chair; we put hoops over it, and hung sheets, to keep the air from the poor sufferer. I determined to walk near the litter with my maid Agatha, and some of my people. My mother, my aunt, and my child, were gone before. Families and friends walked together, and tried to keep united. Each had protectors among the officers and soldiers. The latter, after having done their duty, thought of preparing lodgings and food for the women, the children, the aged, the priests, and the wounded, who had attached themselves to them.

We set out. M. de Lescure uttered such cries as harrowed my very soul. I was overcome with fatigue and distress. My boots wounded my feet. In half an hour, I begged Forêt to give me his horse. He had the charge of commanding the escort which guarded M. de Lescure. We travel-

led between two files of cavalry, and a tolerably large body of infantry were behind us.

A moment after, M. de Beauvolliers came with a berlin he had found. They had dismounted, and destroyed a cannon to have horses; and, laying mattresses in the berlin, we placed M. de Lescure in this kind of bed. M. Durivault went in the carriage also. Agatha placed herself near M. de Lescure, to support his head. The least jolt drew groans from him. He felt from time to time the most acute pains;—cold added much to his sufferings. Sometimes the discharge from his wound was very great; then he found some relief, and they took advantage of these moments to go on: when the pains began again, they stopped. The rear-guard came up to us, and waited for the carriage. M. de Lescure, though almost dying, was fully alive to pain. His temper was changed; instead of his unalterable calmness, and angelic sweetness, he had become impatient, and often passionate. Agatha, skilful and patient, could be of more use than myself, distressed as I was, and short-sighted; and it was for me another source of grief.

We were advancing towards Candé. About a league from the town, a noise we heard made us think there was fighting there. We were almost alone on the road; I was on horseback. We had gone before the vanguard; an instant after, I heard the cry, Here are the hussars! Reason failed me; my first idea was to fly. At the same moment I recollected I was with M. de Lescure. Doubting my own courage, and fearing that the approach of the hussars would strike me with an involuntary and invincible terror, I entered quickly into the

carriage without telling the reason, to make it impossible for me not to perish with my husband. The cries and tumult had recalled his senses; he had started up, called the horsemen, asked for a musket. He wanted to be let out and supported; he would not listen to my representations, and was only hindered by his weakness from getting out of the carriage. Several horsemen arrived galloping. He called to them by their names, excited them to fight: But there was not a single officer; they had all gone on before. At last he perceived Forêt: "You are here," said he; "now I am easier, there is somebody to command." And in reality he grew calmer, and began to praise the bravery of Forêt, and to abuse the cowardice of M. de * * *, whom he had seen hide himself behind the carriage.

This alarm was unfounded; the hussars who had been perceived were only three, and were flying from Candé. We arrived towards evening in this little town; it had been taken after a slight skirmish, in which M. Després de la Châtaigneraie had been dangerously wounded. We were well off there, and found provisions. The peasants came again to beg me to ask permission of the master of the house to take potatoes out of the garden. They were less scrupulous as to the heaps of apples for cider, which in autumn are placed before the doors of almost all the houses in Brittany. Hunger made them throw themselves eagerly on this food which they found before them. This caused much illness, and a dysentery, which ravaged the army.

Early the next day we set out for Segré and Château-Gonthier. A lady of Candé proposed to

hide M. de Lescure and his family; we refused this offer as well as that at Varades.

This march of the Vendéen army presented a singular spectacle. There was a numerous advanced guard, with some cannon; the crowd came afterwards without any order, and filled up the road—artillery, baggage, women carrying their children, old men supported by their sons, the wounded who could scarce drag themselves along, and soldiers all in confusion. The commanding-officers in vain struggled against it. Sometimes, crossing this crowd at night on horseback, I have been obliged to make myself a passage between the bayonets, by putting them aside with each hand, not being heard when begging them to make way for me. The rear-guard then came: it was specially charged with guarding M. de Lescure.

This sad procession occupied almost always four leagues in length. It was giving a great hold to the enemy, if they had taken advantage of such a faulty arrangement. The hussars might easily have charged us, and massacred the centre of the column. There was no protection for the flanks of the Vendéen army: we had not twelve hundred cavalry. There were no other sharpshooters than the poor people who straggled to right and left in the villages for bread. What preserved our army a great while from destruction, was the fault the republicans always committed, of attacking the van or the rear of the column.

It is nine leagues from Candé to Château-Gonthier. We went through Segré, where the peasants, according to their invariable custom, burnt the papers of the administration and the tree of

liberty. After a long day's journey, in which the rain had incommoded us very much, we arrived late at Château-Gonthier, which the republicans had in vain tried for a moment to defend.

I was overpowered with fatigue and hunger; I had set out without breakfast. On the road I had given my bread to some wounded people, and had only eaten two apples the whole day till midnight. I often suffered from hunger during this journey. Physical evils were constantly added to those of the mind.

We heard at Château-Gonthier, that the Blues, on returning to Candé, had massacred some poor wounded wretches, whom we had been forced to abandon, not being able to carry them on. From that time, they constantly committed the same cruel act whenever they found our wounded. This terrible manner of making war excited revenge. M. de Marigny had a justice of the peace of Château-Gonthier seized in a cellar where he was concealed, and who had been denounced as a ferocious republican. He put him to death with his own hand in the public square, and some others in the same manner. Afterwards, in this journey, M. de Marigny sometimes showed himself cruel; no officer imitated him, but they no longer opposed him. It is thus that civil war perverts the character. M. de Marigny, one of the best and mildest men I have known, was become sanguinary.

They gave also, at Château-Gonthier, the first example of discipline. A German soldier wanted to take the money of a woman, and gave her a stroke with his sabre; he was shot. The Germans gave themselves up to a great deal of disorder in this expedition; but they were always se-

severely punished as soon as their crimes were known. Pillage never was permitted. However, it may be easily supposed that the conduct of such an army could not be very strict, and rested more on its morality than its discipline. We had no magazines, no convoys, no provisions. There were no preparations any where to receive us. Seeing us pass without stopping, the inhabitants, even those the most disposed in our favour, dared not employ themselves for us, for fear of being the next day exposed to the revenge of the republicans. We were then under the necessity of exacting provisions; we never raised a general contribution, never authorized pillage; but we were obliged to allow the soldiers to take clean linen and clothes in exchange for those they wore. I was obliged sometimes to do the same thing, and to beg of the people some coarse but clean clothes.

We passed twelve hours at Château-Gonthier; then we set out for Laval. The Chevalier Duhoux was charged with the command of the rear-guard, and came to take the orders of M. de Lescure, for the time of departure.

Fifteen thousand national guards had assembled for the defence of Laval; but they made a poor resistance, and fled. We lost in this battle two officers, much regretted; M. de la Guérivière and the gamekeeper of M. de Bonchamp. M. de la Rochejaquelein ran a very great danger. Since the battle of Martigné, in which he had been wounded, he always kept his right arm in a sling. It, however, did not make him less active, nor less bold. In pursuing the Blues before Laval, he was attacked alone in a hollow road by a foot soldier; he seized him by the collar with his left hand, and

managed his horse so well with his legs, that the man could not do him any harm. Our people arrived, and wanted to kill the soldier. Henri forbid them: "Return to the republicans," said he to him; "tell them you were alone with the chief of the brigands, who has only one hand and no arms, and that you could not kill him."

The Vendéens were very well received at Laval; the inhabitants were favourably disposed. The town is large, and furnished more resources than former places had done. Many of the *Breton* peasants came and joined us. I saw a troop of them arrive, crying "Vive le Roi!" and carrying a white handkerchief at the end of a stick. In a little while there were more than six thousand of them. They gave the name of *Petite Vendée* to this assemblage. All these *Breton* insurgents were to be known by their long hair, and by their clothes; the chief part were of goat skins, with the hair on. They fought very well; but the country did not rise entirely. This division was formed of young men only, and from a great number of parishes.

CHAPTER XV.

BATTLES BETWEEN LAVAL AND CHATEAU-GONTHIER —ROUTE BY MAYENNE, ERNEE, AND FOUGERES— DEATH OF M. DE LESCURE.

It was determined that the army should pass some days at Laval to rest it, establish some order, and give the whole country time and means to rise and join the Vendéens.

This repose was of great use to M. de Lescure.

He visibly regained strength, and the second day he was much better. In the evening several officers were with me, when all at once there was a report that the Mayençais were coming to attack us. At first they told us there was nothing in it; however, I soon heard preparations for battle. The soldiers were assembled and encouraged. It was not without fear that we saw ourselves assailed at night in a flat country by these formidable Mayençais, who had driven us from our homes. We were lodged at the entrance of the town, towards Château-Gonthier. I had M. de Lescure transported to a house in the opposite suburb.

M. Forestier went immediately with some officers to ascertain the march of the enemy. He found they were really advancing on Laval, and returned to inform the generals. M. de la Rochejaquelein sent M. Martin of the army of Bonchamp, at the head of some horse, to reconnoitre a second time. He acquitted himself with promptitude and precision. They marched then to meet the republicans, whom they found between Laval and Antrames. They supported an instant the shock of our army, whose numbers and movements were hidden by night, but were soon turned; and the disorder became such, that our people took cartridges from their caissons, and they from ours. This confusion was favourable to the Vendéens, who lost few men, and killed a great many of the enemy. The darkness was so great, that M. Keller gave his hand to a republican to help him out of a ditch, thinking him one of ours. The flashes of the cannon showed him all at once the uniform, and he killed him.

The next day passed very quietly. M. de Lescure was so well, that he returned on horseback to his first lodging. The day after that, it was

known from the morning, that all the republican army was coming to attack Laval. The defeat of the division which had been engaged, had showed them that the Vendéens were still numerous and formidable. They had now reunited all their forces, which amounted to full thirty thousand good troops.

We felt the importance of the approaching battle. Every measure was carefully taken, and it was resolved to redouble our efforts and courage. M. de Lescure wanted to take advantage of the little amendment of his health, to mount on horseback and go with the army. We had great difficulty in dissuading him. Seeing we were all opposed to this mad project, he set himself at the window, and, by his gestures and his voice, he encouraged the soldiers who were going to battle. The fatigue and emotion of this fatal morning destroyed the fruits of three days' repose and care; and, from that moment, his situation grew worse and worse.

The battle began at eleven o'clock in the morning. The Vendéens attacked briskly. The republicans had two pieces of cannon on a rising ground in the front. M. Stofflet, who was by the side of an emigrant, said to him, "You shall see how we take cannon." At the same time he ordered M. Martin, surgeon, to charge on the pieces with a dozen horsemen. M. Martin set off on a gallop. The cannoneers were killed, and the two pieces carried away. They turned them immediately against the republicans, added to them some of ours, and M. de la Marsonnière was charged to point them. A spent ball struck him so violently, as to bury his shirt in his flesh. He wanted to continue; but the pain became too great, and he was obliged to retire. M. de Baugé supplied his place.

This battery was important; it was exposed to the hottest fire of the enemy. MM. de la Rochejaquelein, de Royrand, and d'Autichamp, were almost continually with M. de Baugé, making their pieces always advance in front of the republicans, who were retreating. The drivers were so frightened, that they were obliged to whip them on. For a moment cartouches were wanting; M. de Royrand galloped off for some. Coming back, a ball struck him on the head; he died of this wound some time after. The courage and the perseverance of this attack, decided the success of the battle: it became complete, when M. Dehargues, at the head of a column, had turned the enemy, and attacked him in the rear. The Blues gave way, and fled in disorder to Château-Gonthier. They wanted to form again in the town, and placed two cannon on the bridge, to defend it. M. de la Rochejaquelein, who had pursued them briskly, said to his soldiers, "What, my friends, shall the conquerors sleep out of doors, and the conquered in the town?" The Vendéens had never had so much ardour and courage; they rushed on the bridge; the cannon were taken. The Mayençais tried a moment to resist; they were overthrown, and our people entered Château-Gonthier. M. de la Rochejaquelein continued the pursuit. He saw that the Blues still endeavoured to form in front; he sent instantly to Château-Gonthier for the artillery. Several horsemen were perceived returning at full speed; they carried the order. Our people imagined that the enemy had regained the advantage. A panic spread among them; they precipitated themselves in crowds in the streets, in such disorder, that there were twenty people killed; Stofflet's horse was squeezed to death between his legs. But all was

soon cleared up; the republicans were finally routed, and pursued some way.

M. de la Rochejaquelein displayed in this battle such talents and coolness, as gained the officers' admiration. He had always been till then rash and impetuous, precipitating himself on the enemy, without troubling himself who followed him. This day he remained constantly at the head of the columns, kept them together, prevented the bravest from going forward alone, and by that means occasioning a confusion often fatal to us. He took care to oppose masses to the republicans; and they could never regain the advantage, as sometimes happened, by facing about in their retreat, and repulsing their scattered pursuers. It was evident how important Henri considered it to render the victory as complete as possible.

Here we ought to have stopped, and returned in triumph to our own country, after having taken ample revenge on those Mayençais who had driven us from it. There would have been no difficulty in retaking Angers, and repassing the Loire. It was the opinion of M. de la Rochejaquelein; but most of the officers were at Laval. He was at Château-Gonthier, with the advanced guard and the young officers, and dared not take such an important resolution without the advice of the elder ones. He determined to return to Laval, where they expected, however, an order from him to march to Château-Gonthier. A body of republicans had assembled at Craon: he took that road, and gained a complete advantage.

It was after this return, and during the councils which were held to deliberate as to what was best to be done, that cabals, jealousies, and secret manœuvres, began among the chiefs and the army.

The opportunity of repassing the Loire was over; time had been allowed the republicans to prevent it; the Vendéens regretted it bitterly. M. de Talmont, who thought himself sure of all Brittany, wanted to march on Paris. Many other chiefs were for going to Rennes, which was well disposed for us. From thence they might have taken measures to raise the country.

During the battle, they had brought a letter to the generals of the royalist army. M. de Lescure was the only chief who was then at Laval. They gave him the letter. I opened it, and read it to him; it was short. After great compliments on the success and the bravery of the royal army, it announced that an army of fifty thousand insurgents were ready to rise near Rennes, and that their chiefs desired a passport to come from the place where they were concealed, to confer with our generals. This letter came, I think, from M. de Puyssaye; it was thought a very strange one. I do not remember the subscribers; but after each name there was their rank—such a one general, such a one major-general, &c. We were much amused with these generals, who commanded fifty thousand invisible men, and who asked for a passport. The man was sent for who brought the letter; he would neither give details nor explanations, and refused to say from whom he received it. It was then supposed he might be a spy, and that his letter was a false one. It was answered verbally, that since we were only twelve leagues from Rennes, the fifty thousand men might begin to move, and that we were ready to second them; and as to the passport, it was not necessary to have one to speak to the generals. This information could not

inspire confidence enough to determine the going to Rennes. But as some fermentation and beginning of revolt certainly existed, we ought undoubtedly to have taken that direction.

They talked also of attacking a sea-port. An officer of the artillery, named M. d'O***, who had engaged in the revolt of General Wimpfen and of the Girondins, and who had just joined us, spoke of Granville, of which he knew the weak side, and offered to direct the attack. M. de Talmont still persisted in an expedition to Paris. He said if we could not enter, it would be always easy to join the Austrians in Flanders. Henri opposed this scheme. He represented how impossible such a march was for an army dragging after it women, children, and wounded. The time of year was also a great objection, without saying anything of the military obstacles the enemy would certainly oppose. He added, the Vendéen peasants would never undertake such a journey; and it was at last nearly resolved that they should march to Fougères; from thence they might equally go to Rennes or towards the coast.

Towards the latter part of our stay at Laval, I saw that M. de Lescure suffered more and more. He had been relieved by the quiet of the first few days. Many splinters had been taken out of his wound; it had been more regularly dressed, but he was not tractable in doing what was ordered. He would not take any medicine, and lived only on rice, milk, and grapes. The bone of his forehead was injured further than had been perceived at first. His hair was glued together by blood, and by the matter from the wound, and hurt him much, and he would have it removed. Agatha, who was

very skilful in dressing his wound, and supplied very well the surgeon's place, who was absent that day, undertook to cut it off. I wanted to have only a little part of it taken away; he insisted upon having it all cut, assuring us it would relieve him; nothing could dissuade him from it. I have always thought that it was this operation, and the fatigue he underwent the day of the second battle, that were fatal to him, and which destroyed the hopes we had at first conceived. Whatever he occupied himself with took entire possession of his mind, and gave him such an extreme agitation as bordered on delirium, and inspired me with terror. All the day he talked of war, of what had passed, and what might happen. One morning the brave Bourasseau came to see him, and told him that before the passage of the Loire his parish had already lost five hundred men, killed or wounded. M. de Lescure talked to us all day of the courage of those people, exalting incessantly their heroic devotion. I tried in vain to calm him; at night he had a fever, and he visibly grew worse. I sent for M. Desormeaux, a very good surgeon, who never left me. I could not look at the dreadful misfortune which threatened me.

We stayed nine days at Laval. The day before our departure, I was in the morning lying upon a mattress near M. de Lescure's bed. I thought him dozing. Every body had left the room; even M. Durivault. He called me, and said, with his usual gentleness, which he then regained, and which never forsook him afterwards; "My dear friend, open the curtains." I rose and opened them. "Is it a fine day?" continued he.—"Yes," I answered. "I have then something like a veil before

my eyes; I do not see distinctly. I always thought my wound was mortal; I no longer doubt it. Dear friend, I am going to quit you; it is my only regret, except that of not having been able to replace my King on the throne. I leave you in the midst of a civil war, pregnant, and with a child; this is what afflicts me: try to save yourself in disguise, and go to England." I was choked with tears. "Your grief alone," continued he, "makes me regret life. As for myself, I die easy; although a sinner, I have done nothing which can give me remorse, or trouble my conscience. I have always served God with piety; I have fought, and I die for him. I hope in his mercy. I have often seen death near, and I fear it not. I leave life with confidence, and I only regret you! I had hoped to make you happy. If I have ever given you cause to complain, forgive me." His countenance was calm; he seemed already in heaven; only, when he repeated to me, "I regret nothing but you," his eyes filled with tears. He said again to me: "Comfort yourself by thinking that I am going to heaven. God inspires me with this confidence. It is for you I weep." At last, no longer able to bear it, I went into a closet which was near. M. Durivault returned; M. de Lescure told him to look for me, and to bring me back. He found me on my knees, suffocated by my tears; he tried to encourage me, and took me back into the room.

M. de Lescure continued to speak to me with tenderness and piety; and seeing what I suffered, he added with kindness, that perhaps he was mistaken as to his situation, and that it was better to have a consultation of physicians. I sent for them immediately. He said to them, "Gentlemen, I

do not fear death; tell me the truth; I have some preparations to make."

He wished, I believe, to receive the sacraments, and to renew a will he had made in my favour; but I repulsed with horror all that announced death near. The physicians gave some hope. He answered them calmly: "I think you are mistaken; but do not fail to give me notice when the moment draws near."

They quitted Laval the 2d of November, without having determined positively if they should go to Rennes. The road to Vitré was the shortest to go there. Stofflet, on his own authority, took the road to Fougères, with the colours and the drums, which were usually under his direction.

On the road, M. de Lescure learned a piece of news which I had carefully concealed from him, and which did him a great deal of harm. The carriage having stopped, somebody came and read to him from a newspaper the details of the Queen's death. He cried out, "Ah! the monsters, have they then killed her!—I fought to deliver her! If I live, it will be to revenge her!—No more quarter." This idea never quitted him;—he spoke incessantly of this crime.

In the evening we stopped at Mayenne: the next day we continued our journey. The army, after a skirmish, in which it succeeded completely, entered Ernée;—we passed the night there. I was overwhelmed with fatigue. I threw myself on a mattress by M. de Lescure, and went into a deep sleep. During it, they perceived all at once that the patient lost his strength, and was dying. They put on blisters. He asked for the same confessor whom he had had at Varades; but, an instant af-

ter, he lost his speech. He received absolution and extreme unction. They made no noise, not to awaken me. At one o'clock in the morning, sleep left me, and I saw the frightful situation into which M. de Lescure had fallen. He was still sensible, without being able to speak. He looked at me, and raised his eyes to Heaven in tears; he even squeezed my hand several times. I passed twelve hours in a state of despair and distraction impossible to paint. It is difficult to conceive how so much misery can be borne. Towards noon, we were forced to quit Ernée, and continue our journey. This appeared impossible to me. I wanted them to leave us, at the risk of falling into the hands of the Blues. The Chevalier de Beauvolliers wished to remain with us. They represented to me, that exposing myself to a horrid death was disobeying M. de Lescure. They told me his body would fall into the power of the republicans. I had already been struck with that idea. The indignities to which the body of M. de Bonchamp had been subjected, had made a deep and horrid impression on me, and I could not bear the idea of such a profanation. This decided me to quit Ernée. What a frightful war! what enemies! To be obliged to steal from their fury a dying man, who had fought so generously, and so often spared them! Thus I was condemned to see his last moments disturbed, and hastened by the agitation of this fatal journey. I got first into the carriage on the mattress by M. de Lescure. Agatha was on the other side. He suffered dreadfully. All our friends represented to me that the surgeon was more useful than me, and that I prevented his giving the necessary cares. They made me get

out of the carriage, and put me on horseback. My mother, the Chevalier de Beauvolliers, MM. Jagault, Durivault, and the Chevalier de Mondyon, surrounded me, and took care of me. I saw nothing;—I had lost all power of thinking. I distinguished neither objects, nor what I felt. A dark cloud, a frightful void, surrounded me.

I will own, that, finding on the road the bodies of many republicans, a sort of secret and involuntary rage made me, without saying anything, push on my horse, so as to trample under foot those who had killed M. de Lescure. In about an hour, I heard some noise in the carriage, and sobs;—I wanted to rush in. They told me M. de Lescure was just the same; that the cold would hurt him if the door was opened; and they drew me off. I suspected my misfortune; but I dared not persist. I dreaded the answer which would be made me. I repulsed with horror the suspicion which had seized me. I had lost all power, and I abandoned myself to what they chose to do with me.

I remained seven hours on horseback, close to the carriage. The weather was rainy. In approaching Fougères, we heard the town was taken, after a battle, which had been murderous for the republicans. They had thrown up some ramparts of earth before the entrance, and our people had made an opening through, where only one waggon could pass at a time; therefore there was a great stoppage on our arrival. They told us it would take two hours before the carriage could enter the town;—it was even almost impossible to go in on horseback. They entreated me to walk. I suffered insupportable pains. They represented to me that it was a duty to preserve myself for the child with-

in me, and whose existence I had exposed so much. I suffered myself to be led, exacting from the Chevalier de Beauvolliers a promise that he would take me to M. de Lescure as soon as the carriage arrived. My mother was opposed to it; she had tried already more than once to draw me from this sight of grief.

When I wanted to walk, I found it was impossible. Suffering and fatigue had bent me so double, I could not raise myself. It was quite night. I found myself alone in the crowd with the Chevalier de Beauvolliers: he tried to carry me; but though very strong, he was himself so exhausted with grief, that he could not. We arrived, dragging ourselves along, in the first house of Fougères. Some good soldiers who were lodged there made me draw near the fire, gave me a little wine, and took care of me till a carriage sent by my mother came to conduct me to the lodging which she had in the town. I found there a bed prepared; they wanted me to go to it. I placed myself near the fire, without saying any thing. I asked from time to time if M. de Lescure's carriage was arrived. When I heard it, I made every body go out, and claimed the Chevalier de Beauvolliers's promise. He and I were alone ignorant that all was over. He went out. A moment after, he returned, bathed in tears; took my hands, and told me I must think of saving my child.

In reality, the time when I had heard a noise in the carriage had been the last of M. de Lescure. The surgeon had got out; Agatha wished to do the same; but then thinking that seeing her I should be sure of my fate, she had had the courage to pass seven hours in this horrible situation. She was in a swoon

more than two hours. She had been brought up with M. de Lescure from her infancy.

The room in which I lay at Fougères was a passage room. The perpetual going and coming, the presence of our people, though they dared not speak to me, was insupportable. I believe, however, that if I had been at liberty to have given way to my despair without constraint, I could not have resisted it. I began to feel pains which seemed to announce a miscarriage; they became so violent as to make me scream. M. Putaud, a physician, at whose house we lodged, was called. He declared I should miscarry if I was not bled instantly. M. Allard was there; and not knowing where the surgeons were lodged, he went down into the street, calling out, "A surgeon! help! a woman is dying!" A man presented himself; he brought him to me immediately. I have never known the name of this surgeon; but his figure, and the fright he caused me, are still present to me. He was six feet high,* looked ferocious, had four pistols at his girdle, and a great sabre. I told him I was afraid of being bled. "I have killed," said he, "more than three hundred men with this hand, and this very morning I cut off the head of a *gendarme*; I shall know very well how to bleed a woman. Come, give your arm." I held it to him; he bled me; the blood came out with difficulty; and I found myself sick. All night M. Putaud gave me composing medicines.

The next day, MM. de la Rochejaquelein, de

* Six feet French, equal to nearly six feet and a half English.

Baugé, Desessarts, and the Chevalier de Beauvolliers, particular friends of M. de Lescure, entered my room; they seated themselves far from me, without speaking a word, and in tears. In a quarter of an hour Henri rose; he came and embraced me. "You have lost your best friend," I said to him; "after me, you were the dearest to him in this world." He answered with an accent of grief I never shall forget, "If my life could restore him to you, I would bid you take it." The old M. d'Auzon came also to embrace me. Every body wept, and looked upon the loss of M. de Lescure as the greatest misfortune.

It was soon a kind of consolation to me to speak incessantly of M. de Lescure; to recall to my memory all that related to him; to hear how much and how deservedly he was regretted, and deserved to be so. This sentiment never will leave me; it will be that of my whole life. It first inspired me with the wish of writing these Memoirs.

I had always a dreadful terror of seeing M. de Lescure's body a prey to the outrages of the republicans. I wanted to have it embalmed, and take it with me in the carriage. It was opposed absolutely; they represented to me the dangers to which I exposed the child I bore. I made the Abbé Jagault promise that he would perform this melancholy duty. He had a solemn service celebrated at Fougères, and he had the bowels buried there. The body was put in a coffin, and placed in a waggon. They had found on this body the marks of the hair-cloth which M. de Lescure had worn in his youth, unknown to every body.

M. Jagault was taken ill some days afterwards at Avranches. They took advantage of this cir-

cumstance to bury the coffin. I never knew the real cause. They made me believe at first there was some delay and blunder as to the arrival of the waggon; I rather think it was my father who had it buried secretly on the road. He had always strongly opposed my frantic design of not separating myself from it. However that may be, it is still a subject of regret to me not to know where his remains are deposited;—I have at least the certainty that they have not fallen into the hands of the republicans.

The uneasiness on account of my health diminished a little. There only remained a constant slow fever, which lasted more than six months, and which reduced me to a state of weakness and apparent decline.

CHAPTER XVI.

ARRIVAL OF TWO EMIGRANTS SENT FROM ENGLAND —ROUTE BY PONTORSON AND AVRANCHES—SIEGE OF GRANVILLE—RETURN BY AVRANCHES, PONTORSON, AND DOL.

I AM going to continue the melancholy account of my misfortunes; they were at their height: But the sufferings of the Vendéens were still to be much increased. The officers were occupied at Fougères, with what had already been attempted at Laval, namely, to organize the army. It was determined that the council of war should be composed of twenty-five officers; M. de Donnissan, governor of the conquered districts, and president

of the council; M. de la Rochejaquelein, commander-in-chief; M. Stofflet, major-general; M. de Talmont, general of cavalry; M. Dehargues, adjutant-general; M. de Chevalier Duhoux, deputy-adjutant; M. de Beauvolliers, treasurer-general; M. d'O***, commander of the engineers; M. de Marigny, commanding the artillery; M. de Perault, second in command; M. Desessarts, commanding the Poitevin division of M. de Lescure; le Chevalier de Beauvolliers, second in command; M. de Villeneuve de Cazeau, commanding the division of M. de la Rochejaquelein; M. de Baugé, second in command; M. de Fleuriot, commanding the division of M. de Bonchamp; M. d'Autichamp, second in command: Messieurs de Lyrot, d'Isigny, de Piron, de Royrand, (but he was dying,) de Rostaing, the Chevalier Detouches, formerly an admiral, de la Marsonnière, Berard, aide-major of Messieurs Stofflet, and M. de Lacroix. The curate of St Laud had also the privilege of assisting at the council of war.

All the officers who were in the council, were to have, as a distinctive mark, a white sash with a coloured knot, which was to mark the difference of rank. M. de la Rochejaquelein had a black knot, M. Stofflet a red knot, &c. The inferior officers had a white scarf round the arm; all which was become necessary. On the left bank, each one knew his chief; they marched by parishes. After the passage of the Loire it was otherwise. Whole parishes had passed the river,—men, women, and children. In some others, not an individual had followed the army. Some companies found themselves without their commanders, and some commanders without their companies.

During the three days that we passed at Fougères, two emigrants arrived from England. I am not sure I remember exactly their names; but I think they were M. Freslon, of the *Parliament* of *Rennes*, and M. Bertin. Both were disguised as peasants. The dispatches were hidden in a hollow stick. They read first a letter of the King of England, flattering for the Vendéens, and in which help was generously offered them. A letter of Mr Dundas entered much more into details. He began by inquiring what our object was, and our political principles. He added, that the English Government was quite disposed to assist us; that troops were ready to bear upon any point we should name. He indicated Granville, as appearing preferable. The two envoys were authorized to concert measures with the generals as to the landing; and they assured us of the exact performance of their stipulations.

When the two emigrants had delivered the English dispatches, they broke the stick lower down, and took out a short letter of M. du Dresnay, one of the principal Breton emigrants, then in Jersey, who was in correspondence with the English ministry. He wrote to the generals, that they must not place entire confidence in the promises of the English. It was true that the preparations for a landing were made, and all seemed to announce they were in earnest; but he saw so little zeal and real interest for us, that we must not depend entirely upon that appearance. He added, that the emigrants continued to be treated as before by the English Government; that of all those who were in Jersey, none could obtain the permission, so much wished for, of going to La Vendée, and that

they had even just disarmed a great number of them. We learned also by this letter, that the princes were not yet in England.

The two emigrants said they coincided in opinion with M. du Dresnay, and that it was impossible not to have doubts, if not of the good faith, at least of the activity, of the English. They were afflicted with the situation of the army, and showed much discouragement. Thus their mission bore the same character as that of M. de Tinténiac.

It was, however, necessary to accept the offers of the English, though not placing entire confidence in them. In the almost desperate situation of the army, nothing was to be neglected; and it was a point of great importance to take a sea-port, by the assistance of the English, in which we might deposit the crowd of women, children, and wounded, who embarrassed the march of the army. They had already spoken of Granville; M. d'O*** said, it was easy to take it by surprise. They decided on this attack; the signals were agreed upon with the two envoys. If the town was taken before the arrival of succours, a white flag between two black ones, was to give notice of it to the English.

The King of England's letter was answered with expressions of respect and gratitude. A memorial to Mr Dundas was minutely drawn up. He was assured once more, that the Vendéens had no other intention than to replace the King on the throne, without interfering with the mode of government he should choose to establish for the good of his people. Above all, they asked for a prince of the royal family, or a marshal of France, to command the army—to put an end to the conflict of private pretensions. They next solicited for reinforce-

ments of troops of the line, or at least artillerists and engineers. They represented how destitute they were of ammunition, of military stores, and of money; and they said, that even 500,000 francs would be a great help.

The two emigrants were commissioned to thank M. du Dresnay verbally. All these dispatches were prepared by the Chevalier Desessarts in a council, of which my father was president, and signed by all the members.

Another less important mission had preceded the other some days. M. de St Hilaire, a naval officer, had swam over to St Laurent during the passage of the Loire. He was not charged, like M. Bertin, to negotiate between the English and Vendéens: he had not even any dispatches from ministers; but he brought a brief from the Pope, addressed to the generals. This brief stated, that the pretended Bishop of Agra was a sacrilegious impostor. The curate of St Laud was appointed to read this brief, which was in Latin, as usual. The generals were confounded, and embarrassed what to do. They resolved to keep the affair secret, to avoid the scandal and mischief it would occasion in the army. It was spoken of so little, that I did not know it till I came to Pontorson; if they had taken Granville, they would have shipped off the bishop secretly. Every body was shocked at his having deceived the whole army on so serious and holy a subject; and besides, they thought there might be some treachery under it.

Thus, after leaving St Florent, they began to treat him coolly, and to withdraw all confidence from him. This did not make much alteration; for the insignificance of his talents and character,

and the manœuvres of the curate of St Laud, had already, in a great degree, destroyed his influence. He had hurt himself also by his behaviour at Beaupréau. Instead of putting any constraint upon himself, and being regular and edifying in his conduct, as he was always at Châtillon, he had given himself up to society, and had passed five weeks without performing mass. Madame d'Elbée informed me of all this when I saw her at Beaupréau. However, in spite of it he was still liked, on account of his good and obliging disposition. Even after the arrival of the briefs, some people pitied him, and were angry with the curate of St Laud, who, it was supposed, suspecting the fraud, jealousy having made him quicker-sighted, had found means to write secretly to the Court of Rome, to solicit the brief, (which I do not believe he could possibly have done.) The bishop soon perceived something was found out; and his detection appeared the more inevitable, when, passing through Dol, he was known again. It was there that, being vicar, he had taken the oath which he had afterwards retracted. From this time he became profoundly melancholy, though to appearance unconscious of what had happened.

A negotiation of another kind was going on at Fougères. M. Allard had taken a lawyer of Normandy, who had been enrolled by force in a battalion. This man offered to the Vendéens a piece of service. He said he was much connected with a M. Bougon, a magistrate (*procureur syndic*) of Calvados, who had had a great share in the revolt of that department in the month of June 1793. He said M. Bougon would be happy to rejoin the army, and that he would certainly be very useful

by his talents, his courage, and his influence in the Calvados. He asked for a passport to go for him. They hesitated a good while;—at last they granted it. M. Bougon arrived. He was in reality a very clever man, speaking with facility, and as fit to execute as to advise. He proposed to march into Normandy, and was certain an insurrection might easily be excited there. His project seduced many chiefs. M. de Talmont particularly liked M. Bougon very much; but they had promised to attack Granville; and it was too late to recede.

Leaving Fougères, after having rested there three days, the army marched to Granville, by Dol, Pontorson, and Avranches. There was some resistance in this latter town; but the garrison soon retired. The prisons, full of suspected royalists, were thrown open. A detachment of cavalry sent to Mont St Michel, delivered a number of wretched priests who had been heaped up in this fortress. They had suffered so much, that the greatest part of them were unable to follow their deliverers.

All who could not fight remained at Avranches with the baggage, and the army marched to Granville about thirty thousand strong. The attack began at nine o'clock at night. Very imperfectly prepared, some ladders were the only means they had of entering a town surrounded by ramparts; yet the first ardour of the soldiers was so great, that the suburbs were carried, and they scaled the outworks of the place by planting bayonets in the walls. Some even reached the ramparts with M. Forestier: But a deserter who had his white jacket still on, having called out, We are betrayed! *Sauve qui peut!*—our people fell back; and M. Forestier, overthrown into the ditch, remained there in-

sensible three hours. It was in vain M. Allard shot the deserter through the head. The Vendéens, who had been carried away by a rapid movement, had time to reflect on their temerity, and stopped in their attack. The republicans defended themselves obstinately; they succeeded in setting fire to the suburbs. Disorder began then to show itself in the Vendéen army. The soldiers, whose first onset had failed ultimately, were discouraged as usual. The attack from which they hoped most, was along a flat shore which the tide left uncovered: it did not succeed, because two small vessels from St Malo demolished the Vendéen batteries. They vainly expected assistance from the English; their great expedition could not have arrived; but as they heard the cannon in Jersey, they might have sent vessels and reinforcements. The mere appearance would have secured us the victory. The long range of the cannon on the ramparts, to which our soldiers were unaccustomed, disheartened them. The chiefs and the officers redoubled their efforts. The Bishop of Agra went through the ranks exhorting them, and seeking for a death which his situation made desirable. The Swiss performed prodigies of valour; there were many of them killed. This unfortunate attack was continued the next day and the following night, because they expected the English. MM. de Perault, Roger-Mouliniers, de Villeneuve, the Chevalier de Beauvolliers, the respectable M. le Maignan, were wounded. The number of besiegers diminished continually by the sword and desertion, and the whole army was in fact disbanding themselves. At last M. de la Rochejaquelein was forced to consent to a retreat. The attack had lasted thirty-six

hours; there was no keeping the men any longer. There were no provisions; the ammunition was nearly exhausted; no hope of present help from the English; it was necessary to return to Avranches. There they wanted to adopt the project of M. Bougon. M. de la Rochejaquelein set out immediately with some cavalry to seize Ville-Dieu, on the road to Caen; but a sedition broke out in the army. As soon as they found a route opposite to the banks of the Loire was in contemplation, the peasants assembled in groups, and insisted loudly upon being led back to their own country, and murmured against the generals who had taken them from it. It was impossible to think of any other road than the one they thus chose, and the greatest part of the officers also preferred it. The soldiers would not hear reason, and would have abandoned their chiefs rather than follow them into Normandy. It was necessary to yield. The return to the Loire was announced, to the great satisfaction of all. The soldiers knew that Angers was the most important post on the road near the river. They cried out they would enter it, even though the walls were made of iron.

M. de la Rochejaquelein had been as far as Ville-Dieu with M. Stofflet. The inhabitants defended themselves obstinately. They took and massacred some horsemen who were come as sharpshooters. When our troops entered the streets, the women threw stones from the windows. Henri called to them several times to retire; they continued obstinate; some cannon were fired in the streets, and they ceased. Pillage was permitted in this town, because there was no garrison; but our people did not otherwise injure the

inhabitants. M. de la Rochejaquelein soon heard what passed at Avranches, and was obliged to return.

The next day we took the road to Pontorson. Six hundred republicans had come before it was light to destroy a bridge a league from Avranches; but the elder Lejeay being there with his company of cavalry, heard a noise; and having assembled some infantry, with M. Forestier, fell upon the enemy. They pursued the Blues so briskly, that only ten escaped. They went almost to Pontorson; and being alone before the others, they found themselves at a turn of the road in front of the enemy's army. They wanted to retreat, but Forestier had a restive horse whom he could not turn. He called out "Help, Lejeay! I am lost!" Lejeay came back and took the bridle of his horse. They saved themselves amidst a shower of balls, and rejoined the army, which was advancing.

The republicans tried to defend Pontorson, but were beaten, and lost a great many men; for they were charged with the bayonet in the streets. I arrived in a carriage at nine o'clock at night, as the fighting was just over. A femme-de-chambre, who took care of my poor little girl, and Messieurs Durivault and the Chevalier of Beauvolliers, both wounded, were also with me. The carriage passed every moment over dead bodies. The jolts and the cracking of bones broken by the wheels was horrible. When alighting, a corpse was before the door of the carriage; I was going to step on it, when they took it away.

Forêt was mortally wounded at Pontorson. They destroyed a cannon to have horses to put to a carriage for him. The next morning a report

was spread that MM. de Talmont, the elder de Beauvolliers, and the curate de St Laud, had quitted the army, and gone in a fishing boat to Jersey. In less than an hour after, their absence was perceived. Stofflet, who alone remained to command the rear-guard, had sent M. Martin to pursue them; and, without any other explanation, took possession of M. de Talmont's horses, which remained at Avranches, broke open the chest of M. de Beauvolliers, and was going to take or distribute every thing which belonged to these gentlemen, treating them like deserters. They arrived after three hours' absence, without having seen M. Martin; and complaining loudly of the ill-treatment they had met with, and what had been said of them, every thing which belonged to them was restored immediately.

It appeared that Madame de Cuissard, and her daughter, Madame de Fey, and Mademoiselle Sidonie de Fey, wives and daughters of emigrants, wanted to embark, and had begged the assistance of M. de Talmont. He had made a bargain with the master of a boat, who was to take over these ladies to Jersey; and the following night he had conducted them to the water-side with M. de Beauvolliers, and some other gentlemen. The boat could not approach land on account of the tide. The fishermen had called out, the ladies might approach on horseback without danger, but they dared not venture; and, while hesitating, the republican hussars, perceived at a distance, obliged them to return precipitately.

This affair at first made a great noise in the army. Many people would not believe the justification of these gentlemen: however, I have always

been persuaded they told the truth; what they said was quite probable. M. de Talmont was intimate with these ladies; and it was very natural not to think they could be suspected, while rendering them a service. As for M. de Beauvolliers, he had two brothers whom he tenderly loved in the army; his wife and his daughters were prisoners in Angers; and he was perpetually advising to march there, that they might be delivered. He left the military chest. M. de Talmont and he had not even taken away a portmanteau. Besides, they had too much honour to be capable of such a flight. Four days before, the officers of the army had sworn not to abandon each other, let what would happen. People were surprised that Stoffiet, who was devoted to M. de Talmont, should behave so to him. The whole affair was soon forgotten, and they were reconciled.*

We passed a day at Pontorson. I remember that M. de la Rochejaquelein came to see me, and gave an instance of those natural antipathies which no courage can surmount. A squirrel of an uncommon kind, found in the room of a republican officer's wife, had been brought to me; it was striped with black and grey, very tame, and I had him in my lap. As soon as Henri entered, and saw the little animal, he grew pale; and told me, laughing,

* Since I have mentioned the treasure of the army, I must explain, that it consisted of some assignats, indorsed in the King's name; a million in billets royaux; and perhaps 50,000 francs, in voluntary contributions. Neither soldier nor officer received any pay; but when any one was in want, he asked, and was assisted. The disbursements were mostly for provisions and ammunition.

that the sight of a squirrel inspired him with an invincible horror. I wanted him to stroke it; he resolved to do so, but trembled. He acknowledged this weakness with perfect simplicity, and quite unconscious that it was more singular in him than in another.

That evening I met with an old Angevin peasant, who was in the army with five sons; one of them was wounded; the others carried him, and supported their father also. I gave up my room to this respectable family, and I went to lie down in a great hall on a mattress.

We arrived at Dol, fatigued, and in want of provisions. I went to a room where the Chevalier de Beauvolliers already was, suffering from his wound. A moment after, Agatha came in crying. She told me there was in the kitchen a poor young man, whom they were going to shoot, and who did not appear guilty; she begged me to hear him. He entered, and threw himself at my feet; his countenance was gentle and interesting. He said his name was Montignac; he had been forced to enlist in a battalion at Dinan, and, in order to be able to pass over to the Vendéens, he had got himself sent to Dol. At the arrival of our advanced guard, he had left the gendarmes with whom he was, to come and meet our horsemen; the first he saw was a tall young man, dressed in a blue great coat, and wearing a black and white scarf. He had declared to this young man, that he wished to serve with the Vendéens; then M. de la Rochejaquelein, for I knew it was he, had ordered a horseman to take care of the new comer. Entering Dol, Montignac lost sight of his horseman; he wished to change his dress, and having seen twenty

soldiers at a draper's, choosing what suited them, encouraged by this, he had taken away a piece of cloth; an officer had met him, and had conducted him to the council, as a pillager. He had still on a volunteer's dress; they took him for a deserter, who came to give a bad example to our people; and he was condemned. As he finished his story, Agatha came in, exclaiming, "Madam, here are the Germans coming to take him to execution!" He threw himself again at my feet: I resolved to save him. I went up to my father's, where the council was held; when I was there in the midst of the generals, they asked me what I wanted. I did not dare to explain myself, and only answered, "I came for a glass of water." I went down again, and with a tone of authority, said to the Germans, "You may go; the council puts the prisoner under the guard of the Chevalier de Beauvolliers." They retired. I sent for M. Allard, and I begged him to arrange this affair. I was happy to save this poor man. The day before, I had been very much affected by the sight of three Mayençais passing my window on their way to execution, and with the courage and noble resignation they showed.

CHAPTER XVII.

BATTLE OF DOL.—MARCH BY ANTRAIN, FOUGERES, AND LA FLECHE.—SIEGE OF ANGERS.

At nine o'clock at night, the town was alarmed. A patrol of republican hussars, taking advantage of the incorrigible negligence of our soldiers on

guard, advanced to the entrance of the town. They cried, "To arms!" In an instant the army was on foot; and the hussars fled.

The cries and the noise awakened me. I was so fatigued, I had fallen asleep, though suffering from hunger; my mother told me supper was over; but that I should find something to eat in a great kettle, which was on the table. In it had been mutton and potatoes dressed together, but being too much salted, it had been taken to the well to have water added to it. I picked out some potatoes with my knife. Such was my supper, and I was glad to get even this. I have often felt absolute want of food.

The first attack of the hussars was mistaken for the republican army coming upon Dol. Some officers had been sent to reconnoitre, for it was impossible to trust soldiers for this service; very often it was a single officer, and that the indefatigable M. Forestier. The patrol returned galloping towards midnight, and announced that we must prepare for the attack of a numerous army which was approaching. The town consists of a single wide street, which is the high road to Dinan; on the opposite side, the road divides, almost at the entrance of the town, into two branches—one to Pontorson and Avranches, the other to Antrain and Fougères. It was but too easily to be foreseen that it would be a dreadful action, and that we were all lost if not victorious. Every measure was carefully taken; the women, the wounded, and all who could not fight, left the houses, and were ranged in files along the walls; the baggage-waggons, the artillery in reserve, were in the middle of the street. The cavalry, who were never used in the beginning of

an action, because they were ill-mounted, and unskilful in manœuvres, were placed in two rows, one on each side between the cannon and the women; the horsemen, sabre in hand, held themselves in readiness to charge as soon as the enemy should begin to give way. To animate the soldiers, the drums beat to arms. The moment the Vendéens had formed themselves at the entrance of the town, the attack began, in the midst of a dark night. The cries of the soldiers, the roll of the drums, the fire of the howitzers, casting a transient gleam over the town, the noise of the musketry and cannon, the smell and smoke of the powder, all contributed to the impression made on those who expected life or death from the issue of this battle; in the midst of this we kept profound silence. We had already passed half an hour in this cruel suspense, when all at once we heard at the entrance of the town, Advance cavalry! Vive le Roi! A hundred thousand voices, men, women, and children, repeated the cry of Vive le Roi! which told us our brave protectors had saved us from massacre. The horsemen went off at full gallop, crying with enthusiasm, Vive le Roi! The light of the firing made their sabres shine through the darkness. A ray of hope reanimated every heart. The women returned to the houses; M. Durivault came to me. "I have done enough for a wounded man," said he: it was, indeed, heroic to fight in this situation. He told me the Blues were in full retreat. All the rest of the night we listened to the cannon; the noise of which growing gradually fainter, made us think the republicans defended themselves foot by foot. Towards morning, however, they had retreated two leagues. A thick fog arose at that moment; and

soon after, my father's servant came in haste, and told us from him that we must instantly mount our horses and make our escape, because our soldiers were routed. They put me on a horse, and seeing that my mother and the friends who usually surrounded me were following me, I went on. The fatal news had already spread in the town. An immense crowd filled the street, and were flying. I was dragged on by these fugitives. Soldiers, women, wounded, were all mixed; and I found myself alone among three or four hundred horsemen who tried to rally, and cried with a deep voice, "Forward, brave comrades, to death!" (*Allons, les braves, à la mort!*) It was not a war-cry likely to prove encouraging; and they fled too, like the others.

I was dressed like a countrywoman; I had taken these coarse clothes instead of mourning, and because they might help to save me: grief, and a slow fever, which consumed me, contributed still more than my dress to disguise me. I was among the horsemen quite bewildered, without knowing anybody, or to whom to have recourse. A horseman held his sabre over me, saying, "Cowardly woman, you shall not pass." "Sir, I am with child, and dying; have pity on me." "Poor wretch! I do pity you," answered he; and he let me pass. I was afterwards stopped and insulted more than once. The soldiers, while flying themselves, reproached the women very unjustly for doing the same, and of having caused the route by their fears. At last I reached the end of the town, on the road to Dinan. I found M. de Perault there at a small bridge, where, all wounded as he was, he was ordering cannon to be placed to protect the retreat,

in case the Blues should take possession of the town. He commanded his engineers with perfect coolness, and exhorted the soldiers to return to the battle. A little way from thence, I saw M. de Denan Duchesne, a youth of sixteen, aide-de-camp of M. de Talmont, who was endeavouring to rally the fugitives. He threatened, encouraged, urged them forward, and gave them blows with the flat side of his sabre: he did not know me. "Let the women stop too," said he, "and prevent the men from flying!" I placed myself by his side, and remained there three quarters of an hour without speaking, and witnessing all his efforts: he succeeded in making some soldiers go back.*

This defeat was a shocking sight. The wounded, who could not drag themselves along, lay down in the road, and were trodden under foot. The women screamed, the children cried, the officers struck the runaways. In the midst of all this confusion, my mother passed without my knowing her. A boy was going to kill her because she was flying. She met M. de Marigny, who made way for her; and, as her horse was good, she was soon at the head. What then was her surprise to see

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* Montignac was there. He took hold of my horse's bridle, saying, "You are my deliverer, I will not leave you: we will perish together." I was not very sure of him. "You ought not to be here," I answered: "if you are not a traitor, go and fight." He had no arms. I told him he might easily find some, as our soldiers unfortunately threw away too many muskets. He picked one up, and showed it me with a pleased look, as he ran by me to the battle, where he behaved bravely. He killed two horsemen, and took their horses; and being thus mounted, went into the cavalry.

M. Stofflet, till then so brave, flying one of the first, and having lost all presence of mind! She expressed her astonishment at meeting him in such a place. He appeared ashamed, turned back, as well as her, and began to rally the fugitives. The officers made then a last effort to induce them to return. M. d'Autichamp harangued them. M. de Marigny, with his Herculean stature, and his sabre in his hand, was like a madman. The greater part of the officers had run after the soldiers to rally them. They represented to them they were without any asylum; that Dinan was a strong place; and that, if they went on, they would be stopped by the sea, and massacred by the Blues; and told them they were abandoning a victory already gained. They made them observe their general was still on the defensive, as the noise of the cannon did not approach. "Will you abandon your brave general?" said they. "No," called out many voices. "Vive le Roi and M. de la Rochejaquelein!" Everywhere the same arguments were used to them. My father was at the separation of the road below the town to stop those who came that way.

The women did not show less ardour in recalling the soldiers to their duty. My mother exhorted them, and was not discouraged herself. Madame de Bonchamp, who was in the town, rallied the men of her husband's army. Notwithstanding my want of courage, I had also the desire of opposing myself to the rout; but I was so weak and ill, that I could hardly stand. I saw at a distance some of my acquaintance, but did not venture to move to join them, for fear of adding to the confusion, and appearing to be running away. A number of women showed prodigies of resolution and decision of

character. They stopped the runaways, struck them, and opposed their passing. I saw the femme-de-chambre of Madame de la Chevalerie take a musket, put her horse into a gallop, crying out, "Forward! women of Poitou!"

The priests exercised a still greater influence. It is the only time that I have seen them *fanaticise* the soldiers, as the republicans called it, by employing all the means of religion to animate them; and I cannot conceive it can ever be made a reproach to them, since the massacre was otherwise certain, and humanity required their zeal. While they paused to listen to the cannon, the curate of St Marie de Rhé got upon a hillock near me, raised a large crucifix, and with a stentorian voice began to preach to the Vendéens. He was carried away by his enthusiasm: he asked the soldiers if they would really be so infamous as to give up their wives and their children to be slaughtered by the Blues: he told them the only means of safety was to return to the battle. "My children," said he, "I will march at your head, the crucifix in my hand: let those who choose to follow me kneel, I will give them absolution; if they die, they will go to Paradise; but the cowards who forsake God and abandon their families, will have their throats cut by the Blues, and will go to hell." More than 2000 men knelt down, and he gave them absolution with a loud voice; and they departed, calling out, "Vive le Roi! we go to Paradise!" The curate was at their head, and continued to excite them.

We remained more than six hours scattered over the meadows which were on the road side, waiting our fate. From time to time, we heard our people still had the advantage; however, we dared not re-

turn into the town. At last it was known that the victory was complete, and that the republicans had retired. We went back to Dol. The soldiers, officers, priests, everybody, congratulated each other; the women were thanked for the share they had had in this success. I saw the curate of St Marie return at the head of his troop, with the crucifix still in his hand; he was singing the *Vexilla Regis*, and every one knelt as he passed.

We then learnt all that had happened in the battle. The attack had begun at midnight; the Vendéens had fallen with fury on the republicans, and had made them give way. The darkness of the night, and the rage of the two parties were such, that, in the midst of the confusion, the combatants grappled hand to hand, and tore each other to pieces; they took cartridges from the same *caissons*. Some Vendéens had approached a battery; the artillerymen mistaking them for Blues, called out, "Comrades, get out of the way, we are going to fire!" then our soldiers, knowing them by the light of the fire, killed them at their guns. At seven o'clock in the morning, the republicans had been driven back to within two leagues and a half of Dol, on both roads. M. de la Rochejaquelein was in the left wing, on the road to Pontorson. When he saw the Blues in full retreat on this side, he wanted to go to the right of the Antrain road, where he still heard a brisk firing. The powder was just exhausted; the artillerymen had sent horsemen on the full gallop, to fetch some more; the thick fog made the soldiers imagine that it was a movement of the enemy's cavalry; they were frightened, and fled. The officers ran to rally them; it was thought they also were flying, and the terror augmented.

The rout, once begun, the bravest suffered themselves to be drawn into it. This was the sight which presented itself to Henri, when, accompanied by M. Allard, the Chevalier Desessarts, and some other officers, he went to the right. He was in absolute despair, thought all lost, and was determined not to survive. He advanced towards the Blues to seek death, and remained several minutes with his arms crossed, in front of a battery. M. Allard tried in vain to prevent him, and entreated him not to sacrifice himself. Meanwhile a continued fire was heard at the extremity of the right wing. M. de la Rochejaquelein ran there; he found M. de Talmont, who, at the head of 400 men, maintained his position with heroical courage, a fog deceiving the republicans as to our strength, and the flight of our people. MM. de la Marsonnière and de Baugé had not forsaken him, and together they managed a gun, which had been left by the artillerymen. Henri arrived to the assistance of M. de Talmont, and his presence brought back some soldiers; others, rallied by their officers, returned also, and then the affair was completely decided. Had there been less disorder, they might have disturbed the retreat of the republicans, and obtained a greater advantage; but they could not pursue them. This battle did great honour to M. de Talmont. M. de la Rochejaquelein, and the whole army, took pleasure in repeating that he had saved them from ruin. The vigorous manner in which M. Stofflet had stopped the rout, made it be forgotten that he had at first suffered himself to be drawn into it. Some officers did not reappear; either they had fled too far, or their resolution was exhausted. We were

surprised not to see M. Keller, who had always showed so much bravery. He went to Paris, and hid himself there for a year; after which he joined the Chouans, but they, taking him for a spy, shot him. M. Putaud, a physician of Fougères, at whose house I had lodged, and who commanded the Bretons, had joined our army when we passed that place. He also did not reappear; he had, however, fought very well at Granville, and at Pontorson. In 1792 he had been in the King's guard, and had made himself famous for his duels with the Jacobins. In the short time he had passed in the army, he had showed courage, though accompanied by boasting. He was taken prisoner soon after by the Blues, and perished on a scaffold, at Rennes. Many other officers, less known, also disappeared. M*** took advantage of the opportunity; it was known that he had reached the coast, and succeeded in getting over to England, where he passed himself off for one of our generals.

I too had a great mind to seek an asylum in England; but I knew nobody there in whom I could confide. I knew the Blues massacred the women and children who fell into their hands; but I hoped the army might regain Poitou, and I abandoned myself to the common fate. We passed a quiet night. The next day the republicans, knowing what had happened the day before, at ten o'clock returned again to the attack by the two roads; the Vendéens fought with courage, and the success was never for a moment doubtful; but the enemy defended himself with so much obstinacy, that the battle lasted fifteen hours. It finished by the complete defeat of the Blues, who lost an immense number of men. They were pursued quite to An-

train; and it was in the town itself the greatest slaughter took place.

Too much afraid to remain in the town, I had gone with my mother and other women some distance off, to wait the result of the battle. M. de St Hilaire commanded a patrol on this road, to observe if the garrison of Dinan came on our rear. It did not come out; and he succeeded in getting some provisions for the wounded. We lost two brave officers in this battle. While M. Dehargues was pursuing the hussars, his horse became unmanageable, and carried him into the midst of the enemy's squadron; and there falling down, he was taken, without being able to make any defence. MM. de la Rochejaquelein and de la Roche St André were also surrounded by the hussars. They defended themselves a long time. Henri escaped, and returned immediately with some horsemen to deliver M. de la Roche St André, who was mortally wounded. But it was in vain he pursued the hussars beyond Pontorson; they could not recover M. Dehargues. His white scarf had marked him to be a chief; and he was instantly carried away at full gallop. He perished at Rennes on the scaffold; and showed great courage, calling out at the execution, *Vive le Roi!*

M. de la Rochejaquelein, after the victory, did not bring the army back to Dol. The baggage, the women, and all who did not fight, left the town to join him at Antrain. The streets were still full of blood and dead bodies when we entered it. We found no provisions; and everybody suffered much from hunger. I lived on some onions which I gathered in a garden. The curate of St Marie, who had animated the soldiers so much at Dol, employ-

ed himself with the same ardour in obtaining the pardon of some republican prisoners condemned to death.* The following day the army marched on Fougères, and took possession of it without resistance. We staid in it one day; a *Te Deum* was sung for the victories of Dol. It was a heart-rending ceremony, from the contrast it presented with our desperate situation. From Fougères we went by Ernée to Laval, and passed two days there; then to Sable and to la Flèche. In all this route we had not seen any Blues; the defeats of Dol had frightened them. The remains of their army had retreated to Angers, and fortified it in haste. We found some abattis of trees on fire in several parts of the road; but not a soldier defending them. Our entry into all those towns, that we had occupied a few days before, was to us a sight of horror and despair. Our wounded, our sick, the children who could not follow us, our hosts, those who had shown us any pity, had been massacred by the republicans. Each of us went on, with the certainty of perishing in battle, or being put to death a little sooner or later.

From la Flèche we came under the walls of Angers, and slept in a village two leagues from it. The following day the attack began. The republicans had barricaded all the entrances, and protected all the weak places by ditches and ramparts of earth. They had batteries in good situations, and were satisfied with defending themselves without attempting a single sortie. Our people, who expected to

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* That is to say, the prisoners of war made by us, or by foreign powers, who were retaken with arms in their hands, the wounded excepted.

fight man to man, and who had never known how to attack the least fortification, were discouraged as soon as they saw the good position of the Blues. The cannon destroyed a great many of our people, as soon as they approached. It was in vain the chiefs ordered a general assault; they could never persuade the Vendéens to it. These poor men, who, since they left Granville, had talked of nothing but of taking Angers at all events, had lost their accustomed ardour. Grief, hunger, misery of all kinds, had borne them down. Entreaties and threats were alike useless; they were even promised the pillage of the town: But, far from encouraging the Vendéens, this idea shocked them very much, notwithstanding our horrible situation and the cruelty of the Blues. The greater part said, that God would abandon us if we allowed ourselves to do such a thing:—so much morality was there among our peasants. Our artillery, however, performed its duty well, and endeavoured to make a practicable breach. The generals, officers, and cavalry, who had dismounted, continued the attack with obstinacy; they could not drag the soldiers forward, but they kept them together,

I had advanced with my family towards Angers, and all the people who followed the army had done the same. Depending upon a quick and easy success, we were all heaped together in the suburbs. The inhabitants were no longer there; they had been ordered into the town; their houses were unfurnished; many were even burned. We carried straw into a large room. I threw myself on it, with my mother, and a number of other people. I was so overcome with fatigue, that I slept for several hours, amid the noise of cannon; we were

very near them; the shot nearly reached us. The attack had lasted twenty hours. When I awoke the next morning, I got upon my horse without speaking to any person, to learn the news.

I was informed, and I saw myself, that our soldiers would not attempt the assault, and that there remained very little hope: I seemed to have lost my senses and still went on. I met the Chevalier Desessarts coming back wounded in the foot. He told me, that our batteries having made a small breach, MM. de la Rochejaquelein, Forestier, de Boispréau, Rinchs, and he, had thrown themselves into it; but nobody ventured to follow them. MM. de Boispréau and Rinchs had been killed, himself wounded; the two others had found great difficulty in retreating. His recital, and what I saw, gave me a kind of wish of exposing myself to the fire, and risking my life; so much did I suffer in the situation in which we were. I continued to advance. I had not more courage than usual, for I was excessively frightened; but my despair drove me on, as it were, in spite of myself, into the midst of the fire. My father, who was in the hottest of the action, perceived me at a distance, and called to me to return. I stopped irresolute. He sent a horseman, who took the bridle of my horse and led me back. I experienced a secret feeling of satisfaction in thus seeing myself out of the danger which I had gone to seek. I returned to my mother; she was alone; her carriage had stopped on the road. My aunt got into it again, with my little girl. An instant after, the postilion came and told us, the enemy's hussars were coming to attack us from behind; that he had cut the horses' traces; and that my aunt had got out as quickly as she could to come

to us. I ran to the place where she was likely to be. I found my child in her nurse's arms, who was bringing her back to the house; but it was impossible to find my aunt. The horses were taken from the baggage-waggons and the carriages. The crowd pressed round to escape the hussars, but could not advance on the other side, because the balls from the town reached our first waggons. I wanted to go to our carriage, which was at the head of them; a ball and a *Biscayen* passed close by me. While I was employed in the melancholy search for my aunt, M. Forestier arrived, and told me, he was going with the cavalry to repulse the hussars. The calmness and confidence with which he spoke, struck me very much; his hat and his coat were pierced with balls. "Here," said he, showing me two holes, "were the balls which killed Boispréau and Rinchs."

The cavalry drove away the hussars, though supported by light artillery. M. Richard, who had lost an eye at Châtillon, was wounded in the arm, and made prisoner in this battle. General Marigny, who commanded the cavalry of the Blues, was so charmed with his bravery, that he sent him back immediately, but on foot, without his arms. M. de la Rochejaquelein returned instantly two dragoons, fully equipped, to General Marigny, the only ones whom he had taken, thanking him, and offering him, in future, ten prisoners for one. This was the only republican general who had shown us humanity; and he was killed that very day.

After an attack of thirty hours, we were obliged to raise the siege of Angers; the retreat began about four o'clock in the afternoon. We remained a great while to look for my poor aunt, calling to her, exa-

mining every house in the neighbourhood, without being able to discover the smallest trace of her. My mother was inconsolable; my father sent people every way in search of her, with as little success. At last, when it was no longer possible to remain behind, without running the risk of being taken, we followed the army, thinking my aunt might have concealed herself, as she had a great deal of money about her. We never knew the particulars of her strange and melancholy disappearance; but we heard of her being taken prisoner, and perishing on the scaffold two days afterwards.

I got to within two leagues from Angers. Cold, fatigue, and grief, had almost rendered me insensible. I threw myself on a mattress with my mother, surrounded with many other people. Almost the whole army bivouacked.

We had now lost every hope of safety; the army gave itself up to the most complete despair; they no longer saw any means of repassing the Loire. All the schemes which had been formed depended on the taking of Angers. The officers were discontented with the soldiers, who had not shown the ardour which was expected from them. Sickness increased every day. On all sides the cries were heard of the wounded wretches whom we were forced to abandon. Famine and bad weather added to all this misery. The chiefs were harassed in mind and body; they knew not what determination to take.

CHAPTER XVIII.

RETURN TO LA FLECHE.—DEFEAT OF MANS.

BEFORE any thing had been decided as to the route that was to be taken, we went to Baugé, which we took possession of without resistance. M. de Royrand died on the road of the consequences of his wound. The next day the cavalry of the Blues came to attack us with flying artillery. I saw the skirmish from my window; the balls were rolling about the garden under it. Our people attacked the assailants briskly, and repulsed them. We pursued them two leagues on the road to Angers, as far as the fine castle of Jarzé. The republicans had set it on fire; which we tried in vain to extinguish. We lost few men in this affair. M. Roucher, commandant of the parish du Pin, was badly wounded by his musket bursting in his hand, and completely disabled.

It was necessary, however, to come to some determination as to the course the army should take. There was some idea of going to Saumur and Tours; but these towns were on the left bank;—there was no getting there but by the dike along the side of the Loire, and it was dangerous to engage in such a road. The Chevalier Desessarts, whose bravery, and facility in speaking and writing, gave him sometimes too much confidence in his own opinions, supported this plan most obstinately. He maintained, that, when upon the dike, it might be cut, which would turn off a great part of the wa-

ter of the river, and make it fordable. There was no convincing him of the absurdity of this plan, particularly at this time of the year. It was at last determined to go to Mans by la Flèche. The peasants of Maine were thought to be royalists; and, besides, it was drawing nearer Brittany, where we might hope to get recruits, and to defend ourselves. We set out. I was in a carriage with the Chevalier de Beauvolliers. His eldest brother came to the door to speak to us. He thanked me, with tears in his eyes, for the care I took of his brother, and entreated me to continue it. "As for me," said he, "I am the most unhappy of men. My wife and my daughter are prisoners at Angers; I had hoped to deliver them; but they will perish on the scaffold, without my being able to save them. Since we left Avranches, where I was so unjustly accused, many people suspect me; I am indeed unfortunate." He bid us adieu; and then again turned back, begging me once more to take care of his brother. From that day he left the army, never to return to it. I do not believe, however, he had formed a settled plan of retiring from it; and, indeed, he had left his own money and effects in the waggon of the military chest, and certainly he would have given them to his brother if he had thought he should not see him again. He told me, the next time I saw him, that he had left the road with M. Langlois, his brother-in-law, in search of provisions. He found himself intercepted by the hussars, and he then took decidedly the resolution which before had only occasionally occurred to him. His brother-in-law was taken and put to death.

Our retreat was protected by a numerous rear-guard commanded by M. Piron. We expected to

be attacked on that side; but we did not think we should meet with much resistance before us. What, then, was our surprise and grief, when, coming to La Flèche, we saw the bridge broken down, and three or four thousand men placed on the other side! We thought ourselves lost; for at the same moment M. de Piron was attacked. M. de la Rochejaquelein gave orders not to give way either in front or rear, and to continue the fire. M. de Verteuil was killed there. He took three hundred brave horsemen, with three hundred infantry mounted behind them, and went up the river three quarters of a league, found a ford, and came towards evening to the gates of the town, made his soldiers dismount, and rushed into the streets at the head of his troops, calling out Vive le Roi! The Blues, surprised and frightened, fled by the road to Mans. M. de la Rochejaquelein had the bridge repaired as quickly as possible, and hastened to the rear-guard, where he repulsed the enemy's hussars. A part of the army entered the town; the baggage remained on the road till day-light. I slept in my carriage. The next day the cavalry returned to the attack; the army was worn out with fatigue. M. de la Rochejaquelein, accompanied by MM. de Baugé and Allard, and very few officers, defeated once more the enemy's detachments; and when the baggage had entered, he ordered the bridge to be again destroyed, and thus secured twenty-four hours repose to the army. He was vexed and discontented with the carelessness of the officers who remained at La Flèche, leaving him to fight almost alone. "Gentlemen," said he with bitterness, "you not only contradict me in the council, but you abandon me in the field."

While I was at La Flèche, I looked for an asylum for my poor little girl. Nobody would undertake the charge of her, notwithstanding the rewards I offered; she was too young to be concealed and kept from crying. Madame Jagault succeeded in finding a person to take her daughter; but she being four years old, could understand the necessity of being silent, and did not endanger her hosts.

The army bore on Mans. The bridge was not destroyed; but they had raised a rampart, furnished with *chevaux de frise*, and planks stuck with large nails to prevent the passage of the cavalry. Notwithstanding which, M. de la Rochejaquelein, after a brisk skirmish, soon penetrated into the town. It was in this affair that M. de Talmont distinguished himself by a great exploit. Singled out by a hussar on account of his general's scarf, he called out to him, "I wait for you." He did in reality wait for him, and cleft his head with a blow of his sabre.

Everybody was overcome with fatigue. The day's journey had been long. The wounded and the sick, of whom the number were rapidly increasing, earnestly begged to be allowed a longer stay in a large town, where they found food and comforts; and, besides, they wanted to restore the army to a little order, recal its wonted courage, and concert some plan. Generals, officers, and soldiers, everybody was cast down. It was evident we should all be destroyed sooner or later, and that the struggles we made were only the agonies of death. We were surrounded with suffering; the sight of the women, children, and wounded, weakened the strongest minds, at the very time when a miraculous courage was necessary. Our

misfortunes had soured the minds, and produced disagreement among the chiefs. The check at Angers, the loss of all hope of re-entering La Vendée, had given the last blow to the spirit of the army Everybody wished for death; but as they saw it certain, they preferred waiting for it with resignation, to retarding it by fighting. In short, every thing presaged our utter ruin.

Mans is situated on the high road from Alençon to Tours; the road from Paris to Angers crosses it half a league from the town. A large bridge on the Sarthe is half way between the roads and the suburbs. The Alençon road crosses a large square, then a small one, where a narrow street, which is the continuation of the cross road of Mans to Laval, ends. I lodged in this small square. The second day, early in the morning, the republicans attacked Mans; they were not expected so soon. The day before, *levées en masse* had appeared, and had been soon dispersed. The enemy advanced in three columns, on the point where the roads cross each other. M. de la Rochejaquelein placed a considerable body in ambuscade, in a pine wood on the right. It was there the defence was most obstinate; the Blues were even repulsed more than once; but their generals always brought the columns back again. Our people grew discouraged on seeing their efforts were useless. Little by little, many returned into the town; even some officers suffered themselves to be drawn along. At last, about two o'clock in the afternoon, the Vendéens being thrown into confusion on the left, they were obliged to abandon the wood. Henri wanted to put his remaining troop in a field, protected by hedges and ditches, where it might

easily stop the cavalry, but he never could succeed in rallying it. Three times he, MM. Forestier, and Allard, darted into the midst of the enemy, unaccompanied by a single soldier. The peasants would not turn to fire even once. Henri, making his horse leap a ditch, the saddle turned, and he fell; he rose filled with despair and rage. It had not been decided what road should be taken, in case of defeat; or any orders given for the defence of the town, or for a retreat. He wanted to enter it, to take measures, and try to bring back his soldiers. He galloped into Mans, throwing down the poor Vendéens, who, for the first time, were deaf to his voice. Every thing there was already in confusion. He could not assemble a single officer, with whom to concert measures: his servants had not even kept a fresh horse ready for him. He returned, and found the republicans coming to the bridge; he had artillery placed there, and it was long defended. At last, when the sun was setting, the Blues found a ford, and passed; the bridge was abandoned. They then fought at the entrance of the town; till the general, officers, and soldiers, renouncing all hope, suffered themselves to be carried along in the rout, which had been long begun; but some hundreds of men remaining in the houses, fired from the windows, and not knowing exactly themselves what was passing, stopped the republicans all night, who hardly dared to advance in the streets, and had no idea our defeat was so total. There were officers who staid there till four o'clock in the morning; I believe the last were MM. de Sepeaux and Allard. Some brave peasants had steadiness enough not to leave the town till eight o'clock, escaping, as it were, by a miracle. It was this

circumstance which protected our disorderly flight, and which preserved us from a general massacre.

From the very beginning of the battle, we foresaw its final issue. I was lodged at a Madame T***'s, who was a woman of education, very rich, and a republican. She had seven young children, whom she tenderly loved. I resolved to trust my child to her; it was her sister-in-law who had received the little Jagault. I entreated her to take charge of it, to bring it up like a poor little peasant, and only to give it sentiments of honour and virtue. I told her, if she was destined ever to recover her situation, I should bless heaven for it; but I should be resigned to her always remaining in poverty, if she was virtuous. Madame T*** refused me positively; but told me politely, that if she had taken my daughter, she should have treated her like one of her own children. I have been surprised since then to hear that this lady, who belonged to one of the best and most respectable families, behaved with cruelty towards our prisoners, after our defeat. While I was conjuring Madame T***, the cries of the vanquished were heard; she left me. Then seeing all hope was over, I wanted at least to save my child. I hid it, without telling any body, in Madame T***'s bed; depending on her not having the cruelty to abandon the innocent creature. I went down. They put me on horseback, and opened the gate. I then saw the square filled with a crowd, pressing and throwing down each other in their flight; and in a moment I was separated from every person I knew. I perceived M. Stofflet taking away the colours. Meanwhile, as there was a free space along the wall, I stept that way; but, when I wanted to turn

into the street which leads to the Laval road, I found it impossible; it was there the press was the greatest, and quite suffocating. Waggons and cannon were overturned; the oxen lying on the ground could not rise, and kicked those who had fallen on them. An infinite number of people trodden under foot, cried out without being heard. I was dying with hunger and fear, and could scarcely see, as it was growing dark. At the corner of the street, two horses were fastened to a fence, and barred my way. The crowd pushed them constantly towards me, and then I was confined between them and the wall. I called out to the soldiers as loud as I could, to take them, and ride off. They did not hear me. I saw a young man on horseback pass near me, with a gentle countenance. I took his hand. "Sir," said I to him, "have pity on a poor woman, sick, and with child. I cannot go on." The young man began to cry; and answered, "I am a woman also; —we shall perish together, for I cannot make my way in the street any more than you can." We both staid and waited.

Meanwhile the faithful Bontemps, the servant of M. de Lescure, had looked for my daughter everywhere. He found her, and had her in his arms. When he perceived me in the middle of the crowd, lifting her up, he called to me, "I save my master's child." I bowed down my head, and resigned myself. An instant after, I perceived another of my servants. I called him. He took my horse by the bridle; and making way for me with his sabre, he led me along the street. We arrived with great difficulty near a little bridge in the suburb on the road to Laval; a cannon was overturned on it, and encumbered the passage. At last I found myself

in the road, and I stopped with many others. Some officers were there, trying to rally the soldiers; but all their efforts were useless.

The republicans, hearing a great deal of noise on our side, pointed their cannon towards us, and fired over the houses. A ball whistled above my head: an instant after I heard a fresh discharge, and I leant down involuntarily over my horse. An officer who was there, reproached me with an oath for my cowardice. "Alas! Sir," said I, "a poor woman may be permitted to bend her head down when all the army flies;" and in fact, this firing made our people begin again to run who had stopped. Perhaps, had it been light, they might have been rallied. I went on in the crowd, and met M. de Sanglier. He had lost his wife the day before; was sick himself; and had his two little girls, who were also sick, on horseback. His horse had not even a bridle. He informed me we were going to Laval. I found successively several of my acquaintance, whom I knew by the moon-light. Some leagues from Mans, I saw my father and M. de la Rochejaquelein arrive. They had long tried to rally the soldiers. Henri came to me. "Ah! you are safe," said he. "I thought you must have been dead," I answered, "as we are beaten." He grasped my hand, saying, "Would I were dead!"

I was in a horrible situation. A servant still led my horse by the bridle, and supported me. Soldiers made me drink brandy out of their *gourds*; I had never tasted any. I wanted to have water mixed with it, but none could be found except in the puddles. After that, my father never quitted me. My mother and my child were safe; but I did not know where they were. Twelve leagues

from Mans I stopped at a small village. The night was become so dark, that a woman who followed me went with her horse on a mill-dam. She fell into the water, as might easily have happened to me. I knew not if they were able to save her. M. de Bonchamp took refuge in the same house with me. A great part of the army stopped in this village. There was but little room in the cottages. The road was covered with poor people, who, overpowered with fatigue, were sleeping in the mud, without even thinking of sheltering themselves from the rain. The next morning we set out again. Hunger, fatigue, and suffering of all kinds, had so worn out everybody, that a regiment of hussars might have exterminated the Vendéen army. Little by little, those who had remained behind and in the village during the night, rejoined us. We arrived at Laval. I found there my mother and my child. It was there we had time to perceive the losses we had suffered. The defeat of Mans had cost the lives of more than fifteen thousand men. It was not in the battle the greatest number had died; many were crushed to death in the streets of Mans; others, wounded and sick, remained in the houses and were massacred. Some died in the ditches and in the fields near the road. A considerable number followed the Alençon road, and there were taken and conducted to the scaffold.

During the battle, the Chevalier Duhoux was killed. M. Herbault, that virtuous and brave man, was mortally wounded. His friends wanted to stay by him. "No," said he, "you shall not expose yourselves in vain for me; only lay me by the side of M. de Maignan." They both insisted upon being left alone; and having distributed among them

their arms and effects, they waited for death with a truly Christian resignation. Two brave officers wounded at Angers, MM. l'Infernat and Couty, died there also.

A great many officers never appeared again. M. de Solilhac was taken, and shut up in a church to be shot the next day. He succeeded in saving himself. Some others were equally fortunate. Among the horrible massacres of which the conquerors were guilty, there were traits of courageous humanity which preserved many Vendéens. But in leaving Mans they ran new dangers; they went on only to be taken, and to perish further off. MM. de la Roche-Courbon, Carrière, Franchet, and de la Bigotière, had this melancholy fate. M. d'Autichamp was luckier; for having been taken, M. de St Gervais, his relation, a republican officer, knew him again, and dressed him like a hussar, as well as M. de Bernès. These gentlemen found themselves enrolled among the republicans. They fought as common soldiers for a year against the northern army. They afterwards reappeared in the second insurrection.

M. d'O*** disappeared also at Mans. It was since known that he was in the service of the republican army with a superior rank. This circumstance, added to the advice he had given for the attack of Granville, occasioned strange suspicions, of which there had even been some whisper before. However, it ought to be said, that M. d'O*** always fought bravely; and especially at the affair of Granville, he showed so much courage and devotedness, that the officers who were near him on that day have always doubted of the infamous treachery of which perhaps he has been falsely accused.

Such was the deplorable defeat of Mans, in which the Vendéen army received its death-blow. It was inevitable. This terrible catastrophe might easily have been foreseen, when we quitted the left bank of the Loire, with a multitude of women, children, and old people, to seek an asylum in an unknown country, ignorant even of the road to it, and at the beginning of the winter. The having so long warded it off, was the greatest glory of the generals and soldiers.

CHAPTER XIX.

ATTEMPT TO REPASS THE LOIRE.—DEFEAT AT SAVENAY.—DISPERSION OF THE ARMY.

I LODGED at Laval in the same house where I had been before; but the owner, whose name was M. de Montfranc, was no longer there. After the Vendéens passed, he and his family had been arrested. They reproached him with having received us. In vain he represented, that an inhabitant had no power of refusing lodging to conquerors. They would not listen to him; he perished on the scaffold. The truth was, however, that he was disposed in our favour; but that, being infirm, he had done nothing which could implicate him.

The next day, at ten o'clock, as we were setting out for Craon with the wreck of the army, the arrival of the republican hussars was announced, and everybody quickened their march. Going out of

the town, I saw M. de la Rochejaquelein; he told me it was only a false alarm; that he had been reassuring the soldiers, and stopping their flight; and that he was returning to breakfast quietly at Laval. He begged me not to be uneasy; and assured me we should get to Craon without interruption. This was the last time I ever saw him.

At Craon we read the newspapers; they informed us that my poor aunt, and seven hundred fugitives, had been found in the environs of Angers, tried, and shot. This shocking news threw my mother into despair; we loved my unhappy aunt tenderly. She was eighty years old, most amiable, and her piety of the gentlest kind.

From Craon, the army went to St Marc, on their way to Ancenis. We marched day and night, in order to be enough in advance of the republican army to pass the Loire without interruption. The roads were bad, and the weather cold and rainy; it was scarcely possible to drag on the sick and wounded. I saw a priest carrying one on his shoulders, and sinking under the weight. My child was dying from illness, and still more from fatigue: I lay down with her in the waggon which carried the military chest. We had no longer any carriage. I travelled thus for some leagues.

We arrived at Ancenis the morning of the 16th of December. M. de la Rochejaquelein had entered the first without resistance, and was already preparing for the passage of the Loire. He had taken a small boat from a pond at the Château de St Marc, and had placed it in a waggon. He foresaw we should have no means of passing, because the republicans would take away the boats on our arrival: the opposite shore was in their power, and

they had troops at St Florent. However, M. de la Rochejaquelein was assured that a small body of insurgents had appeared before Ancenis some days before. We found a small boat at Ancenis; but we saw on the other side four large ones loaded with hay. M. de la Rochejaquelein, seeing that nobody would attempt the passage, determined to pass himself immediately; seize the boats by force if necessary; have them cleared out, and defend the landing-place against the Blues; and, above all, he hoped to hinder the Vendéens from disbanding themselves, when they arrived on the left bank, as it was much feared they would.

MM. de la Rochejaquelein, de Baugé, and Stoffiet, went in the boat brought in the waggon, and M. de Langere in the other, with eighteen soldiers. All the advanced guard of the army looked anxiously on these two boats, on which our fate seemed to depend. In the mean time they gathered together boards, casks, and wood of all sorts, to make into rafts. The curate of St Laud preached to the peasants, to occupy them, and prevent disorder.

M. de la Rochejaquelein got to the other side. While he was employed in clearing the boats, a republican patrol bore on that point: there was some firing, and our soldiers were soon dispersed, and pursued. At the same time, a gunboat, placed before Ancenis, fired on the rafts, as soon as they were floated:—many were sunk. The river was strong and rapid, and very few soldiers could get over, notwithstanding the great wish they had to reach the left bank.

Thus was the Vendéen army deprived of its last hope, and separated from its general. Nothing now remained but death. At the same moment, the

hussars, and some pieces of flying artillery, arrived before Ancenis; but the gates were barricaded, and the Blues dared not attack. They threw shot into the town, with no effect. We knew not what to do. M. de Beauvais, an artillery officer, threw himself into a small boat, and promised to return in twenty-four hours, and bring us news of what was passing on the left bank. The officers promised not to leave each other; but wished, above all things, to cross the Loire. Some succeeded; —M. Allard did, the next day; for, being aide-de-camp to M. de la Rochejaquelein, he was anxiously bent on following him. The army was dispersing fast. Some concealed themselves in the country; others went up or down the river to seek a passage. Some having heard of an amnesty granted to those who would enlist in the other army, (a false report, purposely spread by the republicans,) chose to go to Nantes. Our servants asked our leave to do this. We told them, in the situation in which we were, every one must try to save his life; but that this amnesty did not appear probable. They persisted in believing it; and protested to us, what was very true, that their sentiments for us and for our cause had not altered, and that they would desert the first favourable opportunity. Two days afterwards, they set out for Nantes, where the greatest part of these worthy people perished. My mother's two women remained with us.

It was now become necessary to quit Ancenis. The army of the Blues was advancing, and going to surround us. We went towards Nort. It was during this journey I concealed my child;—she was the object of my greatest uneasiness. The poor thing was very ill; and there was no possibi

lity of taking her with us during a flight, which, besides, according to all appearance, would not save us. At last, after much searching, I found a person who offered to conceal her with some good peasants near Ancenis. I consented. I gave them money; and promised them a considerable annuity if it ever was in my power. I dressed my child like a peasant's, and set out with a feeling like death at my heart.

By this time, I do not believe we were more than ten thousand. We stopped at Nort, and staid there twenty-four hours. Disorder continued to prevail among the few Vendéens that remained;—it was so great, that some officers divided among themselves the military chest. I was with my father and mother, and the Chevalier de Beauvolliers, when M. de Marigny came and informed us of this vile action. He was in a violent passion, and had tried in vain to prevent it. I should be very sorry to throw suspicion on any persons whatever for this affair. I am quite ignorant who was guilty.

Some moments afterwards, we heard the cry, "To arms! here are the Blues!" We fled, and the whole army did the same. The bravest no longer thought of defending themselves. M. Forestier, and some others, mounted their horses, struck into the country, and crossed the Vilaine. It was then our servants, and 150 cavalry, surrendered themselves to the false amnesty.

During this time, my father, the Chevalier Desessarts, a brave dragoon named Moulin, who was only seventeen, and some others, went towards the republicans with a piece of cannon. They waited for the hussars, fired upon them with case-shot, and killed seven or eight, and thus made them turn

back. We passed the rest of the day quietly at Nort. The next day we went to Blin. M. de Fleuriot was appointed general there. It appears M. de Talmont was hurt at this preference, which determined him to quit the army. In our horrible situation, the wish of commanding was nothing but an excess of self-devotedness. Every instant deprived it of some of its officers. M. de Fleuriot made preparations for defence; some pieces of cannon were placed on the road, and loop-holes made in the walls. The light troops of the Blues were repulsed, and we passed two days at Blin. It was necessary, however, to leave it before the arrival of the republican army. We were inclined to go to Redon, but we feared the long and narrow causeway to it. However, the republicans had not prepared any means of resistance; and it would have been the best way, if we had known it. We set out for Savenay in the middle of the night; it was cold, and rained hard. Nothing can give an idea of our despair: hunger, fatigue, and grief, had transformed us all. Everybody was in rags. We had great difficulty in knowing each other, under all these appearances of the most wretched poverty. I will give some description of it. Besides my peasant dress, I had on my head a purple flannel hood, an old blanket about me, and a large piece of blue cloth tied round my neck with twine. I wore three pair of yellow worsted stockings, and green slippers, fastened to my feet with cord. My horse had a hussar's saddle, with a sheep skin (*chabraque.*) M. Roger Mouliniers had a turban, and a Turkish dress he had taken from the playhouse at La Flèche. The Chevalier de Beauvolliers was wrapped up in a lawyer's gown, and had a woman's hat over a flan-

nel night-cap. Madame d'Armaillé, and her children, were covered with pieces of yellow damask. M. de Verteuil had been killed in battle with two petticoats on, one fastened round his neck, and the other to his waist. He fought thus equipped.

The republicans followed the Vendéen army very closely. I stopped with my mother for a moment at a farm-house, to ask for something to eat, when we perceived the hussars, and were obliged to gallop to rejoin the army. We entered Savenay; the gates were shut, the fire of musketry began: However, the rest of the day passed without serious attack, and our people repulsed a detachment in advance. We supposed that the republicans meant to give us battle with all their forces, and we saw that our ruin was about to be consummated. About nine o'clock at night, they made me get up. I had thrown myself on a bed with my clothes on; they placed me on horseback, without my knowing why. I was going to alight, uncertain where I should go, when I heard M. de Marigny's voice. I called to him for information; he took the bridle of my horse, and without saying a word, led me to the corner of the square. There he told me in a low voice, "It is all over; we are lost; the attack of to-morrow cannot be resisted,—in twelve hours the army will be exterminated. I hope to die. Try to escape;—save yourself during this night. Adieu! adieu!" He left me abruptly, without waiting for my answer; and I heard him encouraging the soldiers, and trying to reanimate them.

I returned to my mother: she was with my father. The Abbé Jagault proposed to him, to take a man from the town, who could be depended on, for a guide, and who would conceal us at some

good peasant's. I told my mother what M. de Marigny had said; and she then consented to do what was proposed to her. My father leaned his head on his hands, and could not speak; at last, however, he persuaded us to take this resolution. "As for me," said he, "my duty is to remain with the army while it exists." He trusted us to the care of M. Jagault; conjured him not to abandon us; and begged him to try to let him know where we were concealed. M. Jagault promised to return the next day to tell him. We dressed ourselves like peasants; we embraced my father, but could not speak; he only said to me, "Never leave your unhappy mother." These were his last words.

We set out about midnight with M. Jagault and Mademoiselle Mamet, my mother's servant, who would not leave us. We had still about sixty louis, and some assignats, with the King's signature.* We went out by a small gate, and took the road to Guérande; we heard at a distance firing and horses galloping; we trembled every moment for fear of meeting the patrol; however, we went three quarters of a mile without finding anybody; our guide continually stopping and saying, "Listen! listen!" then he went on repeating, "They are fighting." This man would not leave the high road.

* After the passage of the Loire, between Varades and Ingrande, I had lost all my diamonds, trinkets, and money, which I carried in a box behind me on horseback. Entirely taken up with M. de Lescure, I forgot them. I heard afterwards, that two of our servants had taken them; and I thought no more of them. They followed us one day, and then disappeared. One of them, who was very faithful, was killed; and the other ran away with the booty.

In spite of our entreaties, he wanted to make us go into a house. My mother gave him her watch to engage him to go on farther. He was drunk. At last we persuaded him to leave the road; and then he conducted us across the fields. Every step we fell into ditches full of water. We had wooden shoes on for the first time, and we could not walk in them. We were obliged to stop three quarters of a league from Savenay, as we could go no farther; and our guide was falling down, overcome with drink and sleep. We went into a cottage. The guide told us we were quite well there; and then fell asleep immediately. We soon perceived we were at a very little distance from the high road. Our hosts did not think themselves in safety. They offered to conduct us to the Château de l'Ecuraye, the owner of which had emigrated. A peasant, who farmed the estate, lived in the house with his family. They told us he was a worthy man. A young girl served us as a guide. Mademoiselle Mamet remained in the cottage.

We set out, and at two o'clock in the morning arrived at the gate of the Château. They made us wait. My mother said, "I must die here, if we are not admitted." I threw myself on my knees to pray to God that they might not refuse us. At last the gate was opened. "Here," said the young girl, "here are some *brigandes* who have escaped to our house; but we are too near the road."— "Ah! poor people," cried the farmer and his wife, "Come in! Everything here is at your service." They warmed us, dried our clothes, which were quite soaked, and gave us something to eat. They wanted us to go to bed; but we were too much afraid of being pursued.

This worthy man's name was Ferret. He was quite transported with joy to have any Vendéens at his house. He told us the whole country had a mind to rise, and that many young men were gone to Savenay armed, to join the Vendéens. He could not conceive why we ran away. We dared not tell him all was lost, for fear it might produce a change in him; and, therefore, only said we were sick. In a few moments we threw ourselves on a bed, and fatigue made us go to sleep. At eight in the morning, the noise of cannon awoke us; at the same time Ferret came into the room, calling out, "Oh, God, what is this? There are cannon firing on the road to Guérande, and people of all sorts flying over the heath."—"In the name of God, save us!" we said. "We have been defeated;"—and it was too true. The Blues on horseback came towards the castle. "Fly!" said La Ferret; "my husband will conduct you to a small farm-house in the wood; you will be safer there than here." The hussars were already knocking for entrance into the court-yard. We went out by a back door, and in three quarters of an hour we arrived at the farm-house of Lagrée, in a very retired situation. "I bring you," said Ferret to the farmers, "some poor people whom I have saved." Some peasants were there grieving for our defeat, who had already taken their guns to join the Vendéens. They were much affected with our condition, and showed great loyalty and goodness.

Meanwhile, the hussars dispersed themselves everywhere. The farmer's wife advised us to separate, to prevent suspicion. She sent poor M. Jagault to work with the men; he was sick, and, as he had walked a great way, his feet were all

bloody. She placed my mother knitting in a dark corner near the fire. She took me to a windmill at a distance from the house, and said to the miller, "Renaud, here is a poor *brigande* whom you must take care of. If the Blues come, you must say she has brought some corn to be ground." I seated myself on a sack, and remained there four hours, every moment hearing the noise of the horses, the firing, and the cries of "Stop the brigands! kill them! kill them!" All the country was covered with fugitives, whom they were massacring. The Blues knocked at the door of the mill, to ask for something to eat and drink. Renaud answered he had nothing. I talked a little with this good fellow; he tried to encourage and comfort me. He spoke a great deal of our army, and asked who I was. I told him I was the daughter of a poor tradesman of Châtillon. We had not trusted our secret to any but Ferret. In the evening Renaud stopped his mill, and took me back to Lagrée. I lay down with my mother, without taking off my clothes.

This farm-house, like all those of Lower Brittany, was a low dark cottage. At the further end is a great chimney, in which they burn turf, its greenish light shedding a ghastly hue on every object round. There are two or three very high beds, with straw mattresses under, and one made with oat chaff over it, two narrow and short sheets, a homespun quilt, and sometimes shabby green curtains. At the foot of the beds chests are piled up one above another, where the peasants keep their grain. The stable is attached to the house, and is only separated from it by a board partition. The rack is placed in front of the cottage, and the oxen pass

their heads through large holes made in the partition to eat out of it; their lowings, and the noise of their horns against the boards, woke us often in a fright, thinking we were going to be taken. The hayloft is always above the house. The rafters are painted black. Besides the entrance-door, there is one opposite going into the garden, and another into the stable.

The poor Bretons are very dirty. They smoke tobacco, drink out of the same pitcher, eat out of porringers, and have neither plates nor forks. Soup made with cabbage (*soupe aux choux*) and porridge made with buck wheat and sour milk, is their chief food; luckily their butter is very good, and it was our resource.

The next day we were forced to separate. The farmer's wife took me in the morning to the Mayor's. In returning I saw two horsemen gallop past; they made us call out Vive la Republique! At first I was very much afraid; and then I perceived they were two wretched Vendéens, trying to escape. In the afternoon they conducted me to the *procureur de la commune* (a sort of magistrate); and his wife told me she would send me with her daughter to take care of the sheep. I was afraid she was a child; but she came a moment after, and I saw a young woman of twenty, with a stick in her hand, according to the custom of Brittany, where neither men nor women ever go out without one. "Here, Marianne, here is the brigande," said Perinne to her.—"Do not fear, mother," answered she; "I will take care of her; I will die rather than abandon her. Provided we are attacked by only one at a time, I can knock him down

with this stick." I went with good Marianne, who showed us ever after the strongest attachment.

In the evening I returned to Lagrée. After some days, we stayed entirely at Marianne's father's house. Though there were fewer people in his cottage, he was not better lodged; but we paid no attention to inconveniences; sufferings and griefs had made us quite insensible to them. We continued to lead the same kind of life. M. Jagault went to work with the peasants. They called him Pierrot; my mother was named Marion, and I Jeannette. I constantly tended the sheep with the faithful Marianne. We were in a small parish called Prinquiaux, which contained four hundred people. All the inhabitants were royalist and hospitable; not one capable of betraying us. The young men had refused to go to the army, and were concealed like ourselves; the neighbouring parishes entertained the same opinions; but to the left of the high road to Guérande the peasants were republicans. Those of our people who sought asylums there perished. It was the same in the towns.

In a few days we saw again Mademoiselle Mamet. She had run great dangers; the people at whose house we had left her did not dare to keep her after the defeat of the Vendéens. She went out, and found herself on the high road in the midst of the fugitives, who were pursued and fired at by the Blues. She arrived breathless at a peasant's, crying out, "Have pity on me!" He took her in, and hid her immediately in a little recess covered with straw, where he kept turnips. The republicans came a moment after, and searched everywhere. They run their sabres and their bayonets

into the straw; Mademoiselle Mamet saw the points come near her, but she was not wounded. After that she dressed herself like a Bretonne; and this worthy man, whose name was Laurent Cochard, consented to keep her. She passed the winter at his house in the parish of La Chapelle, and from time to time came to see us. She was little and young, and like a child, which made her less liable to suspicion. Some days afterwards, another woman of my mother, Mademoiselle Carria, left at Savenay, found also means of rejoining us. She had, when the defeat became total, fled on horseback at full speed, without knowing where she was going to. She heard people killing behind her; and after having miraculously passed through some revolutionary villages, she got to the houses of peasants who were royalists, and concealed her. Little by little she drew nearer, and had found us out.

She gave us some details of that unfortunate battle of Savenay, of which she had been witness, and which completed the ruin of our army. She could speak to us of my father, whom she did not leave for several hours after we did. She had heard it said, before the battle, that if the Vendéens were conquered, which was very certain, he would retire with the officers into the forest *du Gavre*, with the last wrecks of the army; that from thence, either secretly or by force, they would repass to the left bank of the Loire; but that, in all cases, they would fight and perish to the last man. My father made Mademoiselle Carria promise not to leave him, but to follow him in his retreat after the dispersion of the army, that she might seek us out, and carry us news of him, which, probably, a wo-

man might be able to do. In thus making his last arrangements, the idea of never seeing us again distressed him even to tears. His resolution taken, he returned to the public square; and during the whole night he, with M. de Marigny and the other chiefs, never ceased exhorting the soldiers to fight with desperation. All the wounded who could still sit a horse, took arms. M. de Marigny had the precaution of keeping in reserve two pieces of cannon, to protect the flight of the women and wounded, by retarding the enemy on the road to Guérande, after the town should be carried.

At the point of day, the republicans attacked, and the battle began furiously. M. de Marigny, at the head of the bravest, precipitated himself three times on the Blues, holding my standard, and shedding tears of rage. M. de la Voyerie, a boy of fourteen, did not leave him an instant. My father, M. de Lyrot, le Chevalier Desessarts, and M. de Piron, performed prodigies of valour. At last our people could no longer hold out. Then M. de Marigny placed his two cannon on the road to Guérande, and took some measures for the retreat. Twice he returned to the town in search of my father, and again a third time, but could not find him. M. de Lyrot had been killed. The republicans had seen M. de Piron fall, whom they well knew by his white horse, and whom they had learned to dread ever since his victory at Coron.

M. de Marigny saw all was over. "Women," cried he, "all is lost! save yourselves!" He stopped his cannon in the little wood near Savenay, and there began a second battle, which gave the fugitives time to escape. A brave gunner, named Chollet, stood at his piece to the last moment;

and at last, after an hour's resistance, about 200 horsemen regained the forest *du Gavre*. Mademoiselle Carria had lost sight of my father.

This last resistance of the Vendéens must have been truly heroical. Long after this melancholy period, I read in the gazettes of that time, and with pride, the following passage of a letter, written by one of the republican generals to M. Merlin de Thionville, the day after the battle of Savenay.

"I have seen and observed them well; I again knew the same countenances of Chollet and Laval. By their appearance and looks, I swear to you they wanted nothing of soldiers but the dress. Troops who have beaten such French, may well flatter themselves with conquering all other nations. In short, I know not if I am mistaken; but this war of brigands and peasants, on which so much ridicule has been thrown, and which people have affected to treat as despicable, has always appeared to me the one of the greatest importance to the republic, and that with other enemies we shall have only children's play."

CHAPTER XX.

HOSPITALITY OF THE BRETONS—WINTER OF 1793 AND 1794.

We were living in constant alarms; for the Blues made every day inroads in the neighbourhood. The

fugitives and the inhabitants of the country were exposed to the cruelties and caprices of the meanest soldiers. When a peasant displeased one of them, or refused anything which was demanded; if he even prepared for flight, instead of replying, the soldier would fire at him, or deliberately cut off his ears, and afterwards present them to a superior officer, as those of a *brigand* (the name those real *brigands* gave the Vendéens.) Such deeds never failed to secure them praise or reward. The inhabitants of Prinquiaux were surprised by a detachment when on their knees in the church; the soldiers immediately fired on them; happily there was but one man killed.

Nothing could discourage the generous hospitality of the Bretons. Their custom of hiding priests and conscripts had rendered them watchful, and they had need of much address and coolness to conceal the fugitives from the searches of the republicans. Many of them were shot for having afforded an asylum to the Vendéens: however, this did not diminish the devoted attachment, which men, women, and even children, seemed to feel for us, nor cool their active humanity. A poor little deaf and dumb girl, fully aware of the dangers the fugitives had to avoid, used to go and inform them by signs, of the approach of their pursuers. Menaces or rewards had no power on the younger children. The dogs even, often beat by the soldiers, partook of the general feeling; and gave warning of their approach by unusual barking. A fugitive might present himself with perfect confidence at any cottage door; if shelter could not be had, he was at least sure of obtaining some food, and directions to a place of safety: these good

people were even offended if money was offered them.

I shall be obliged to pass over many of the minute incidents, that I may have room for the principal ones.

About the beginning of January, the visit of three armed men gave us a great fright; they came and asked for Marion and Jeannette. One was a Vendéen, and the two others Bretons. They proposed that we should pass the Loire; but we refused, on account of the great risk, as well as uncertainty respecting the state of things on the other side. The Vendéen, after a thousand perils, however, succeeded in joining the army of M. de Charrette.

M. Destouches, a former naval commander, who had followed the army, was concealed near us, a respectable old man of ninety. He became dangerously ill. M. l'Abbé Jagault soothed his last moments, by procuring a priest, who administered the sacrament to him. He had a very faithful domestic, with whom he left a good deal of money; a hundred louis d'ors were to be remitted to his son, who had emigrated. The servant did not know what to do with this trust; and as he wished to repass the Loire, we offered to take the hundred louis, and to be answerable that the younger M. Destouches should receive them. We wrote a receipt on a sheet of lead, which was buried before witnesses. The servant succeeded in joining M. Charrette's army, where he was killed, a year afterwards. I have had the pleasure of seeing M. Destouches since, and discharging the trust.

M. Jagault was always in ill health; and as it was more difficult to conceal men than women, he

was often obliged to sleep out. His peasant's clothes scarcely disguising him, he feared he should be known, and cause our ruin. He therefore determined to get into Nantes, where he was informed he might be concealed, notwithstanding the dreadful situation of things there. Ten baggage-waggons were about to be sent from Prinquiaux to Nantes; he had the courage to go without a passport in one of the waggons as a driver. He entered the town, but had great difficulty in finding an asylum; at last, however, Madame Delaville-Guevray found one for him, in which he escaped all searches.

We continued to inhabit Prinquiaux, without any change in our mode of life. Disheartened by illness and grief, my faculties appeared benumbed; but my mother, watching over me with unremitting vigilance and tenderness, averted, by her care and prudence, the dangers I was incapable of avoiding: her courage and strength of mind saved my life twenty times.

We were usually at the house of an attorney of the commune. Sometimes we changed our hiding-place, from the frequent alarms the searches of the republicans threw us into. These made us very miserable. We neither dared undress ourselves to go to bed, or even sit down to our scanty meals. The provisions upon which we subsisted were mostly salt meat; varied, at times, with eggs, butter, and vegetables procured from a neighbouring gardener, who believed us so poor, that he not only refused to be paid, but once offered to give my mother a crown. A charitable priest also wished her to take twelve francs; so apparent was our distress. The profound dejection, a sort of decline

in which I sunk, made me fall asleep continually; but my mother was awake for us both. Two days never passed without there being some alarm; and then we concealed ourselves in the fields, or in barns, till the Blues were out of sight.

Our good attorney fell ill, and died whilst we were with him; but he did not forget to recommend us to his children. At this time, I felt so anxious to learn the fate of my daughter, that I persuaded Laurent Cochard, the host of Mademoiselle Mamet, to go and inquire about her at Ancenis, where I had left her. By him I learned, that my poor child had died six days after our departure, notwithstanding all the cares of the good people to whom I had confided her. At this intelligence I was completely overcome, though very far from setting any value on life.

M. de Marigny had taken under his protection a very young girl, the daughter of Madame de Rechigne-voisin, who died during the march beyond the Loire. He adopted this orphan, and never quitted her. During the night, he used to wrap her up in his cloak, and made her sleep on a gun-carriage. After the defeat of Savenay, M. de Marigny went to a man in the parish of Donges, and gave her in charge to him, with some money, telling him, that if any misfortune happened to her, he would return and kill him. This man was a republican, and had a son among the Blues. Either from fear of M. de Marigny, or rather from humanity, he took so much care of her, that the son arriving at the house, shortly after, with a detachment of his comrades, the father took him by the hand, saying, "Thy sister is ill, and asleep." The son understood there was some mystery; and she

escaped. After this, the man would not let her stay, but sent her to Prinquiaux, telling her to knock at any door she chose, for the whole parish was filled with Aristocrats. She took the name of Rosette, and employed herself in tending sheep. When we came, she found us out; but we avoided her, for her age and her courage made her very imprudent.

M. de Marigny kept his word; he came to the citizen of Donges, and inquired for his ward. When he heard she was at Prinquiaux, he followed her; and we had the consolation of seeing him, and of conversing with him for two hours. Although he was very remarkable from his great size and appearance, and well known in the country, yet he would not quit the environs of Nantes, but went everywhere boldly. He spoke the dialect of all the villages. One day when he came to Prinquiaux, he was disguised like a poulterer, (for he often took the clothes and tools of different trades.) His courage, coolness, and strength, extricated him from all dangers; and he often entered Nantes, Savenay, Pont-Château, and Donges. He had prepared every thing to cause a revolt among the peasants, and knew exactly the strength of the republican posts. We did not try to dissuade him; for the only chance of salvation was in a desperate attempt. Nothing could now add to the calamities of the Vendéens. M. de Marigny could give us no information about the fate of my father. We collected from him some details of the *noyades* of Nantes, where those who surrendered themselves on the faith of amnesty, and those who were taken, were alike put to death. Our faithful Bontemps, and Herlobig, another of our servants, had been

drowned, tied together; but at the moment they were throwing them in, they clung to two of the republican soldiers, and drew them after.

The enterprise of M. de Marigny completely failed. He wished to surprise Savenay during the night, and six hundred peasants of Brittany came to the rendezvous; but, by a mistake, they dispersed again. The Bretons could not easily be induced to undertake a war like the one in which we had been engaged. They are capable of strong attachments, and of a determined courage; but they have too little ardour and decision. They live more asunder than the Poitevins, and are much less obedient to their chiefs. They are wilful, more interested, and less active than the Vendéens. They cannot bear the idea of their houses being plundered or burnt. Thence the different character of the wars of Brittany, from that which marked the insurrection of Poitou.

M. de Marigny's attempt gave much greater activity to the searches of the republicans, particularly those at Prinquiaux, where the mayor had been among the most ardent in preaching revolt. It was now necessary for us to quit this parish. We removed to that of Pont-Château, in the hamlet de la Minaye, at the house of Julien Riallo. There we found Rosette, who had been also obliged to take shelter with him. We were lying in the barn, when we heard the dogs beginning to bark violently. Julien half opened the door, and saw the Blues passing through the village to visit a house which had been denounced. He called us, and said he thought we had better try and save ourselves, for the number would certainly create suspicion. We left the place with Rosette, and were conducted by

him into a little wood of the Château de Besnet. When we got there, my mother told Rosette it would be necessary for us to separate; and that if she would remain at La Minaye, we would return to Prinquiaux. She preferred going there; Julien conducted her, and we remained in the wood. I placed my head on my mother's knees, and fell asleep as usual.

The Blues spent the night in searching the village, where they found three Vendéens; one among them was a wounded German, who had deserted, and who turned informer. I had always wished to go and dress his wound; but my mother prevented me, fearing he might betray us. This was only one of a thousand other instances when my mother, by her wisdom, saved my life. She was thinking continually of my safety at a time when I was incapable of any exertion. When day-light came, the soldiers had not yet left La Minaye, enraged that a priest had escaped them. Our hiding-place was not two hundred steps from the hamlet; the leaves were all off, and the wood was not thick. Julien came in search of us. My mother said, "This place is too dangerous; do conduct us farther." He would not, alleging that he had six children, who depended on him for support. "Well, then, my daughter," said she, turning to me, "let us trust in God." She gathered some wild jonquils, and put them in my bosom. "This shall be," continued she, "a holiday; Providence will protect us." The impression these jonquils then made on me will never be effaced; and at this distance of time, when I see the flower, my blood thrills through my veins. We felt encouraged, and proceeded across the fields, over hedges and ditches, always trying

to avoid frequented places. We often heard the Blues, and the report of their muskets, and saw them search the wood that we had left. We felt so much exhausted, that we were obliged to stop in a field filled with rushes, where we rested ourselves back to back to support each other. In this attitude we remained several hours, without knowing what to do next, and perishing with hunger and cold. At last Marianne appeared. She had learnt what was passing, and had run to Minaye, and, after speaking to Julien, had traced us in the fields. She took us to her house, which was at a considerable distance. When I got there, I threw myself on a bed, and fell asleep, at the very moment two hundred volunteers arrived in the village. My mother had only time to cry out to Marianne, "Save my daughter; say she is yours!" and went out into the garden in the certainty of being taken. Fortunately the Blues did not think of searching. They walked about, drank milk; and all this passed without my awaking. Some days after, M. de Marigny came to bid us adieu; for, upon finding he could not raise the country, he had determined to cross the Loire.

Our dangers increased daily. The German who had been taken at Minaye had, to save his own life, denounced all the refugees, with whose retreat he was acquainted, but luckily he was ignorant of ours. He had said that M. de Marigny's daughter was concealed at Prinquiaux, and great search was made for her; but Rosette was so little and so bold, that the Blues, even when they met her, never suspected her. One day they were going to kill her dog, and she put herself between them and him, and defended him. She took, however, some days after,

the resolution of crossing the Loire with some refugees, who had agreed to make this perilous attempt. They consisted of M. d'Argens, physician to M. de Charrette, his wife, daughters, and three soldiers. I anxiously wished to accompany them; but my mother would not consent, as I was too weak and ill to bear so much fatigue. They passed the Loire; but on arriving on the other side, the soldiers of M. de Charrette took them for spies, and shot the three peasants. They spared M. d'Argens on account of his age, and from the tears and supplications of his family, and conducted them to M. de Charrette. This kind of mistake was one among the number of dangers to which the Vendéens were exposed. It was believed to be in this way, the two young MM. Duchaffault, who were so distinguished in our army, had perished.

Meanwhile I advanced in my pregnancy, and we were a little more tranquil. The Blues had placed garrisons in all the parishes, as a measure of greater security; but it was, on the contrary, a happy change for us. The soldiers remained in their lodgings, without supposing that any one could be concealed near them. Besides, being thus dispersed, and established in the houses, they were less turbulent and ferocious, and were reconciled by the Bretons drinking with them. Pierre Riallo, secretary of the commune, and brother of Julien, was in particular their best friend. He went regularly every day to dine with the Blues, led them to talk, and discovered all their plans, without ever allowing anything, even when intoxicated, to escape from him. He and the rest of the municipality served them as guides in their patrols, and took care always to lead them to a distance from the refugees.

Notwithstanding this slight amelioration of our condition, my mother, for the sake of still greater safety, formed a very singular scheme.

Two female Vendéens having married Bretons, and remained ever since undisturbed, my mother, anxious to secure for me perfect repose during my confinement, conceived the plan of my becoming the supposed wife of Pierre Riallo, who was an old man and a widower, with five children. A counterfeit certificate of my birth was procured. The municipal officer had promised to cancel the leaf of the supposed marriage, whenever required. The Blues were to have been invited to the wedding. But greater alarms than we had yet experienced suspended the execution of this scheme; for we were informed that we had been denounced, and search made for us. We immediately changed our dwelling, and separated; my mother going to the house of Laurent Cochard, with Mademoiselle Mamet; and I was carried to Cyprien's, a cartwright in the hamlet of Bois-Divet. The next day as I was lying down, a patriot of Donges knocked at the door, and Cyprien desired me to go out by the garden; but not rising quickly enough, the patriot entered. I remained immovable, crouching at the foot of the bed, behind the half-opened curtain, bedewed with a cold sweat, and scarce daring to breathe for half an hour. My sufferings were agonizing, for I feared that Cyprien, not suspecting I was there, might prolong the conversation. Two days after, my mother rejoined me.

The 19th April, we heard the Blues were going to search Bois-Divet. Cyprien carried us directly to his father's-in-law Gouret, who lived in the hamlet of Bourneliere, a municipal officer. I was

hardly able to walk to Gouret's, being near my time; yet on our arrival, he told us that there would certainly be a search during the night through the whole parish, and advised us to go to Laurent Cochard's, which was a league further off. This was to me impossible! and we therefore determined to pass the night out of doors. Gouret, after conducting us into a field of wheat, shed tears on leaving us. We sat down in a furrow; and though it rained, I slept! My mother awaking about one in the morning, heard the patrol of the Blues pass within fifty paces of us. Had there been a dog with them, as was sometimes the case, we should have been lost! At two o'clock, Gouret came to take us back to his house. I then began to feel considerable pains; but imagining I was not so near my time, and dreading a discovery through the midwife, I took no measures for my safety; although there was nobody in the hamlet who could assist me, and Gouret had only two young girls in his family. At nine, however, my pains became so violent there was no longer any doubt. My mother ran out of the house, calling "Help, help!" and fell senseless in the field. Gouret's daughters remained beside me, crying, but not knowing what to do. As for myself, I endured my sufferings with calmness and resignation. Life was to me a burden, and I wished to die! At length I was brought to bed of a daughter, and in a few moments after of another. A married woman, whom they had sent for from a neighbouring village, arrived at this time, and took care of me and the children. As I had made no preparations, they were obliged to take old clothes and rags to cover them. I wished to nurse them. My mother, however, convinced me

it would be impracticable. But where were we to get nurses! We consulted with an old woman of Bois-Divet, and the infants were carried to two or three women, but they refused to take them. At last a cousin of Marianne's, named Marie Mœnard, took charge of them; and three days after, a priest came, and baptized them by the names of Joséphine and Louise. We had four witnesses present, who wrote the testimony of their baptism on pewter plates with a nail, and then buried them in the earth. I was happy in getting this accomplished, as it secured some trace of the existence and name of these unfortunate infants. My recovery was rapid; for, owing to my having led the active life of a peasant, I was hardly worse than those poor people are on similar occasions.

We passed a month very quietly. The cottage we lived in was thought deserted, and the Blues did not come near it. Some days after, my little Joséphine's wrist was observed out of joint. This gave me much distress; and I resolved, that, as soon as she was a little older, I would carry her on my back, begging along the road as far as Barreges. This scheme did not appear, at the time I formed it, at all extraordinary. I had neither hope nor fear for the future. I was become a stranger in the world; proscribed and wretched. My mind was too much sunk to imagine my present situation could ever change!

But my poor infant died twelve days after. According to the ordinary manners of the peasants, I was told this without any preparation. One of Gouret's daughters came into my room, and cried, "Your daughter at Bois-Divet is dead." "She is then happier than me!" I answered; and yet I wept!

CHAPTER XXI.

ABODE AT THE CHATEAU OF DRENEUF.

DURING my confinement, my mother received an anonymous letter, expressing a great desire to serve us, and offering us a better asylum. She hoped that this letter came from some friends, who wished to discover us; and perhaps from those who had given shelter to my father. She answered it with grateful acknowledgments. In a second letter, they offered a visit, which my mother accepted; and on the 10th of May a young lady, named Félicité des Ressources, came to our cottage. She was the fifth daughter of an old inhabitant of Guinrouet, five leagues from Prinquiaux, and of a family which, though decayed, was very respectable. Félicité had taken a deep interest in the Vendéens, and was unceasingly employed in relieving their distresses, though almost always unknown to her family, who were extremely timid. She had heard us spoken of by some of the brigands whom she had assisted, and had anxiously endeavoured to find out our retreat; but regard for our safety had made great prudence and deliberation necessary. She succeeded at length, by means of an old woman, by whom she sent her letters, and who guided her to our cottage. She offered us an asylum with Mademoiselle Dumoustiers, a friend of hers, whom she praised highly, and assured us of her faithful friendship and protection. The interesting appear-

ance of goodness and sincerity in Mademoiselle des Ressources made us rely on every thing she said; and as we were well aware that we were now becoming too well known in Prinquiaux, and also felt painfully the total ignorance our situation there kept us in of all that was passing at a distance, we should have accepted her offers; but our good hosts were very unwilling to let us go. They told my mother there were an hundred and fifty Blues in garrison at Guinrouet, and that the officers lodged in the house of M. des Ressources, who would certainly deliver us up. Félicité guessed what they were saying to my mother, and began to weep. She allowed, the officers lodged with her father; but assured us she had taken measures to prevent our safety being endangered by this circumstance. Her tears, and the encouraging expression of her countenance, decided us. She had also known our retreat too long to leave a doubt of her sincerity. Mademoiselle Dumoustiers had a very respectable character in the country; and the old woman of Cambon we believed incapable of treachery.

The municipality of Prinquiaux gave us passports under the names of Jeanne and Marie Jagu; we were furnished with certificates of our birth from Roche-Bernard; and Ferret promised to claim us as his relations, should we be arrested. I went to take leave of my child, and we then set out upon our journey; Mademoiselle des Ressources on horseback, my mother and I dressed as peasants upon another horse, without a saddle; the old woman of Cambon was on foot, and Pierre Riallo led the way. We had travelled a league undisturbed, when, on approaching a village in the parish of Cambon, we perceived ten Blues in a hollow way;

but we proceeded, and they stood aside to let us pass. Mademoiselle des Ressources raised her veil; Riallo saluted the soldiers; and my mother did the same to two women who were upon the road, and the Blues seemed to have no suspicion of us. Scarcely had we escaped this danger, when a little boy, nephew to the old woman, passed close to us, and said the Blues were making a search in the village we were going immediately to pass through. Félicité turned, and cast an anxious look upon my mother. "We must go on," said my mother. "If we turn back, we are lost!" Had we indeed turned, the other soldiers would then have perceived clearly that we were fugitives; but we sent back Riallo, whom it was useless to expose, particularly as our passports were signed by him. This excellent man wept when we parted; and taking from his finger a silver ring, such as the Breton peasants wear, he gave it to me; and I have worn it ever since.

As we advanced, Félicité sung, to give us ease and confidence. A sentinel was at the entrance of the village, to whom she said, "This is fine weather for a search." "Yes," answered the man, and we entered the village. The Blues were dispersed everywhere; but we passed through without any disaster. A mile from Guinrouet, we saw a republican officer, who came to meet Félicité, with whom he was in love. She had prepared us for this meeting, yet it gave me great uneasiness, and I grew pale with terror, though Félicité did every thing in her power to reassure me. On meeting him, we dismounted. "Well, madam," said this officer, "you see I am without arms, as you order me not even to wear my sword when I walk with

you. I shall some day be assassinated by the brigands; but that will be indifferent to you!" "You know very well," answered she, "that the brigands are my friends, and I shall save you." "I am much afraid," continued he, "that I am at this moment with four of them!" "No," answered she, "but with four aristocrats." He was, however, too much engrossed by his passion to inquire further.

Félicité, seeing me fatigued, said rather imprudently, "Maria, take the arm of the citizen." Since I had been in concealment, I had endeavoured to lessen the whiteness of my hands, lest it might betray me. I rubbed them with earth; and to accomplish it more thoroughly, I had some days before stained them, but in so odd a manner as to attract more attention than their natural colour; therefore I declined taking his arm, but thanked him in *Patois*. He looked pointedly at me, but said nothing. A moment after he took the bridle of my mother's horse, fixed his eye upon her, and returning to Félicité, remarked only, "that it was a sorry horse." It is probable that he suspected we were not peasants; but, though a violent republican, he durst say nothing on account of Félicité. We parted from her; and the old woman led us to the house of a peasant, who expected us at Guinrouet. Four dragoons came the same evening to lodge in his house. My mother, believing herself perfectly disguised, had the temerity to propose supping with them; but I, having less confidence, declined it; and we were put into a chamber separate from them by a thin partition without a door. Being told we were two cousins of the family, the dragoons asked if we were pretty, and showed a great

desire to see us; but were answered, that we were fatigued and sick, and that they should see us at breakfast; and, being plied with wine, they thought of us no more.

The next day Félicité, with one of her sisters, brought us some of their own clothes; but, being either too long or too short, they made us look very ridiculous. To avoid the dragoons, we left the house while they were dressing their horses; and as, upon account of her family, Félicité could not accompany us to Madame Dumoustiers', her sister conducted us. We had a little horse between us three.

Madame Dumoustiers lived three leagues from Guinrouet, at the Château of Dréneuf, of which she had the care, and received us with open arms. She was about forty; mild and delicate; but concealing, under an appearance of weakness, a strong and warm character. Her opinions, or rather her affection for our cause, united to great natural humanity, had devoted her to the Vendéens with a zeal and courage that knew no bounds. She was perfectly disinterested, although poor, and supporting her family on the small farm of Dréneuf. The Château was wretched and inconvenient; but it was surrounded by fine avenues and magnificent woods. Madame Dumoustiers had three sons, eager to join some insurgent corps, and fight with honour for the cause. She had besides a daughter of fifteen, perfectly beautiful, and who is now Madame Coué. We found several persons concealed at Dréneuf, a priest, a Vendéen child, and three soldiers, besides many hid in the woods, and to whom the children of Madame Dumoustiers were continually employ-

ed in carrying food and necessaries. The beautiful Marie-Louise, particularly, displayed an astonishing courage in this charitable employment.

Madame Dumoustiers told us, that the curate of St Laud had for some time been concealed in her house, after a miraculous escape he had by turning round a rock at the same moment with a Blue. She said he intended to raise the Bretons, and had even composed, for this purpose, an energetic and impressive discourse, which she preserved. But finding there was no chance of success, he had crossed the Loire with the brave MM. Cadi. Madame Dumoustiers saw that we were ignorant of all public news, and she concealed many that would have been dreadful to us. She did not even allow us to read any newspapers. We therefore knew nothing of the horrors that reigned throughout all France, and imagined that they had only taken place in Brittany and Poitou, from the civil war.

Dréneuf is situated in the parish of Feygréac, which is very extensive, and contains three thousand souls; yet among so many people, there was not a single individual of whom there could be any distrust. A very striking proof of this had been furnished some time before our arrival.

A search had been ordered in all the parishes; and, that no rebel might escape, the soldiers were ordered to arrest indiscriminately all the men, and shut them up in a church. Happily there was time to give the Vendéens notice they all fled, except the old M. Desessarts, who was discovered and seized when at his prayers. I know not by what accident M. Dumagny was also arrested, but not examined, and carried to the church. When all

the inhabitants were assembled, the commander of the Blues ordered the parish register to be brought, and the names called over. M. Dumagny believed himself lost, and endeavoured to get out; but Joseph, the eldest son of Madame Dumoustiers, detained him, and as soon as the name of an absent inhabitant was called out, he pushed M. Dumagny forward, saying, "Are you deaf? don't you hear they call you?" The general perceiving he looked disconcerted, asked the municipality, and all the assembly, "Is this really the same man whose name is inscribed?" "Yes;" was the immediate and universal answer. The slightest symptom of doubt in any of the peasants, would have been fatal to M. Dumagny. M. Desessarts was shot. He was the only refugee who suffered at Feygréac, although about four hundred of them were hid in the parish. The unanimity was so perfect among those good people, that their vicar had never left them, nor did a day pass without his celebrating mass, sometimes in one place, sometimes in another. And, resigned as he was to martyrdom, to which he daily exposed himself, he never met with any accident.

The very amiable Madame Dumoustiers tried every means to console us, or occupy our thoughts; and the visits of the Blues disturbed us less. The moment they were seen approaching, her children went to meet and converse with them; gave them drink; and the house was scarcely searched. We had resumed our peasant dress.

Mademoiselles Carria and Mamet, who now rejoined us, had been exposed to great dangers since our separation. The patriots of Savenay had at last found out that I had lain in at Prinquiaux; and the

search for us had been redoubled. These two young women being mistaken for us, had been obliged to pass five nights successively in the woods.

In the course of July a newspaper escaped the watchfulness of Mademoiselle Dumoustiers, and fell into the hands of my mother. In it she read the account of seventy persons being executed in Paris, many of whom were of our acquaintance. What grief and astonishment we felt on learning that all France, as well as our provinces, were thus delivered up to the most horrid and bloody anarchy! Some days after, we heard that the death of Robespierre had put an end to these executions in Paris. But our own proscription continued; and at this very time we were exposed to the greatest danger. One day I went with Madame Dumoustiers, her little cousin, and a young religieuse, a refugee, to gather plums in the garden of the château of La Chapelle, when a young man, disguised as a peasant, accosted these two ladies. Marie-Louise said to me aside, it was an inhabitant of Blain, named M. Barbaud, and who had taken a part in the insurrection at Nantes, which began at the same time with ours, and subsided a short time after; he had lived in concealment since that time. Pretending to be a servant, I left him to converse with the ladies, and went with the child to gather plums. Five days after, this unfortunate young man was seized while concealed under his mother's bed, and massacred before her eyes! In searching his pockets they found a letter from his sister, in which she said, "The person whom you saw at the château of La Chapelle with Mademoiselle Dumoustiers and St Xavier's sister, and whom you took for a peasant, is Madame de Lescure. She is fair, about twenty-

one years old; and she and her mother are concealed in the parish of Feygréac." I have never been able to learn how Mademoiselle Barbaud had become acquainted with all these particulars; but I suppose she must have got them from a peasant of Feygréac, who having served under Bonchamp, recognised me, and this peasant had been arrested and put in prison at Blain. In consequence of this letter, three hundred men were sent to surround La Chapelle and Dréneuf. Most fortunately, we were ignorant of all these circumstances, or terror and perplexity would have betrayed us. We imagined it was an ordinary visit, without any particular object. I was in bed with my mother, Madame Dumoustiers with her daughter; and Mademoiselle des Ressources, who had come to visit us, was also in my chamber. On hearing that the Blues were surrounding the house, my mother got up, and putting on her peasant's dress, began to assist in dressing Marie-Louise; and Félicité came and lay down beside me, while Madame Dumoustiers went and opened the door. The Blues demanded the number and quality of the persons who were in the house. Madame Dumoustiers named her children, two nieces, and three servants. She also found an office for the two deserters and the little Vendéen; and told every thing with simplicity and composure. The soldiers came into my room, and Félicité complained of their having awakened her, while Marie-Louise scolded my mother for her awkwardness. They suspected nothing; but went off swearing, "There are plenty of women in this house!" They left our apartment, and we began to breathe again; but Félicité, who held my hand in hers, found I was trembling. We rose, and they

dressed me as a niece of the family. The Blues remained four hours searching through all the château and in the woods. They sought for false doors, trap-stairs, and subterranean passages. They also searched at La Chapelle; and were so enraged at finding nobody, that they carried to Blain all the municipality of Feygréac, and the overseer of La Chapelle, who was a member of it. The next day this overseer was released, and came instantly to Dréneuf. The first person he met being my mother, his surprise almost wholly overpowered him. He told us the search of the preceding evening had been entirely for us; and that at Blain he and the municipality had undergone an examination of four hours, respecting our retreat. These good people had supposed us to be refugees, though they did not know our names. The questions put to them, led them to conclude who we were; but this did not lessen their courage or discretion. Neither bribes nor threats could extort confession from them. They did not doubt that we should be taken; which would have proved their own destruction, as they had exchanged our passports of Prinquiaux. They were put in prison, where they expected us every moment, and watched at the grates, for some one who could warn us of our danger. At the end of twenty-four hours they were released; and we restored to them our passports, which now, in the event of our being arrested, would have been the sentence of their death.

Our alarm was extreme, when we saw the danger we had escaped; and we withdrew to the hamlet of Rochelle, upon the Villaine; but returned in two days, when the measures became less strict,

and we were supposed to have been frightened away.

Notwithstanding this, my mother and I having been denounced as being together, we deemed it prudent, that in case of another nocturnal visit, we should not be found in the same house; and I, therefore, went to sleep in a small neighbouring farm; and every morning leading a cow, I went to Dréneuf, where getting in by a window, I remained till evening.

We saw frequently at this time a M. de la Brejolière of Nantes, a very worthy old man, a concealed outlaw. He attempted to disguise himself as a peasant, but wore under his outer garb fine linen, ruffles, a watch, and perfumes. He made tolerably pretty verses, to which he attached so much importance, that one day while he was repeating a poetic epistle to my mother, notice being given that the Blues were coming, poor M. de la Brejolière could not decide whether to fly or finish his epistle, and at last withdrew still reciting his verses.

It was now near the beginning of October, and our fears were lessening daily, as every thing was gradually calming around us. Meanwhile we knew nothing of what was passing elsewhere; and we neither formed projects nor hopes.

Famine prevailed at Nantes; and I know not from what motive or folly, the whole attention of the Blues seemed to be to prevent the admission of grain into the towns. The second regiment of chasseurs, which had been the regiment of Lescure, was employed in this office. The eldest son of Madame Dumoustiers had been obliged to enter it, and he frequently brought his brother soldiers with him to

Dréneuf, where I often heard them discuss what had become of the daughter-in-law of their old colonel. Some of them said I had been cut to pieces, others that I had been drowned, &c. ; but all agreed in my being dead, which gave me great comfort.

My mother at length ventured to write to Bordeaux, and received a reply, by which she learnt that my uncle De Courcy and his wife were still living, and resided at Citran. The letter, however, was written in such ambiguous terms, that it left us in great uncertainty, yet a beginning of communication was a pleasing circumstance. Soon after we heard of an amnesty having been granted to the Vendéens ; but it was declared at first to extend only to the common soldiers. But the hopes these reports might create were soon damped, when we heard that a man, who had been inquiring for us in the country, had been seized, loaded with irons, and thrown into a dungeon at Blain. All our fears were again renewed, and we retired for eight days to a remote farm in the parish of Avessac, but returned afterwards to Dréneuf. We imagined that this man had been sent by my father to seek us ; but Madame Dumoustiers acknowledged to me the sad truth, that he had been shot at Angers. I concealed this dreadful intelligence from my mother ; and she only knew it positively three years after. All that time she remained in doubt, or rather the most cruel silence, which no one dared to break. As vigorous measures abated every where, Madame Dumoustiers succeeded in procuring a situation for Mesdemoiselles Carria and Mamet at Nantes. They sent us notice, a short time after, that Agatha and many Vendéens were still in prison; but that Cottet, one of our people, had been released, and that it

was he who had inquired for us. They added, that he had been newly arrested at Blain, and brought back to Nantes, owing to a letter having been found upon him, which directed him to a person who could aid him in discovering us.

Intelligence arrived daily, that the persecutions were at an end. The prisons were opened, and a general amnesty was proclaimed. M. de la Brejolière immediately availed himself of it, and many Vendéens followed his example, and even my mother spoke of doing the same. My feelings revolted at the idea; for, besides not thinking the amnesty to be trusted, I could not bear to owe anything to the republicans. I only wished to pass the Loire, and rejoin the army, since there was still one in existence. The widow of M. de Lescure, I thought, ought to have no weakness, and that there would be a baseness in abandoning a single remnant of La Vendée.

My mother represented to me, that these exalted sentiments were unreasonable; that women, particularly such cowards as I was, could not do better than submit to unavoidable evils. I shed tears of indignation. It was just at this moment that M. Dumoustiers had resolved to put in execution the scheme he had long projected of joining the insurgents. While his regiment had been only quartered in the canton, he submitted; but the moment they were ordered to leave it, he determined to desert, and, with a companion of his, named Toupil Lavallette, who had the same sentiments, came to bid us adieu. Madame Dumoustiers, who had the utmost fortitude, bestowed upon her son her entire approbation. I suffered severely at this moment! I was humiliated to see this family so de-

voted; and who, after having saved us, embraced our cause, whilst we were on the brink of abandoning it! To see that young man going with ardour to meet death, when there were even no longer any hopes of success!—this opposition, of their sacrifice and our desertion, drew from me the bitterest tears.

I gave these gentlemen letters for MM. de la Rochejaquelein and Marigny, who I believed were still alive, notwithstanding the rumours of their death. M. Dumoustiers and his companion joined about sixty Vendéens, and deserters, and crossed the Loire with guides whom M. de Charrette had sent to the right bank. They were very well received; and M. de Charrette immediately gave them the rank of officers.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE AMNESTY—DETAILS OF THE VENDEEN FUGITIVES.

My mother continued to urge the amnesty. Madame Dumoustiers sent for the Mayor of Redon, who was one of her friends, to learn every particular concerning it. He confirmed all we heard of the mild measures which had been adopted towards the Vendéens; but I still could not be persuaded, and wished to go to Nantes to see the actual state of things. I was ill of a milk fever; but nothing could detain me. My spirits were too much elevated and agitated by being on the point of taking a desperate resolution, which I vainly opposed, al-

though commanded by necessity. I mounted on horseback, took a guide, travelled twelve leagues without stopping, and entered Nantes dressed as a peasant, with a wallet on my shoulders, and some fowls in my hand. I went to the house of Madame Dumoustiers' friend, where I found Mesdemoiselles Carria and Agatha, who had been released from prison; but Madame de Bonchamp was still confined, and I went to see her. The prisons were almost empty, and M. de Bonchamp was soon to be at liberty. She advised me to take advantage of the amnesty, and apply to M. Haudaudine, one of the prisoners spared at St Florent, and who had become a great protector of the Vendéens. I was informed that M. de Charrette was treating for peace; and that there was, in reality, nothing humiliating in the relations established between the republicans and the insurgents. The Vendéen officers came with their arms and white cockades to Nantes. Many were so imprudent as to deride publicly the republican habits and opinions, and even spit upon the tricoloured cockade, and gave other rash provocations. M. de Charrette, who was desirous of peace, disapproved highly of such behaviour. The representatives who had come to treat at Nantes, were but slightly offended by those proceedings, and only expressed their apprehensions that such conduct might retard the pacification. Being, on a particular occasion, somewhat out of patience at the tone of the intrepid M. Dupérat, whom M. de Charrette had sent to them, they said, "It is surely very strange that you should be so unwilling to treat with the republic, when all the kings of Europe negotiate with her!" "Are they Frenchmen?" replied M. Dupérat.

Nothing could exceed the attention shown to the Vendéens liberated from prison, or applying for the amnesty; and it was even forbid, on pain of three days' imprisonment, to call them *Brigands*. In the quaint language of the day, the representatives ordered that we should be called *Frères Egarés*.*

After this, I determined, though reluctantly, to do as others did, and what was generally thought the only reasonable line of conduct. I first returned to Dréneuf, on an evening of extreme cold, and travelled all night. My mother was satisfied with what I told her, and with my determination; and it was agreed we should repair to Nantes the next day. I was very sorry I could not take my child with me; but she was too young for a journey in such weather, and Mademoiselle Carria remained to take care of her.

My mother travelled in a carriage with Madame Dumoustiers; and I went on horseback, that I might go by Prinquiaux, to visit my little girl, whom I had not seen for seven months. I wandered from the road, and suffered terribly from cold; but I arrived safe, and found my daughter beautiful and healthy, but very delicate; and, after leaving many injunctions with the nurse to take great care of her, I resumed my journey to join my mother at Nantes.

The prisons were at last empty. We found many Vendéens, to whom we were recommended. M. Maccurtin, a good royalist, just released from prison, and whom the representative Ruelle had made his secretary, to show his moderation, un-

* Misled Brethren.

dertook to get our amnesty signed privately, and without delay. We went, at the time appointed, to the office of the representative. He was not there; but I met M. Bureau de la Batarderie, formerly a member of the *Chambre des Comptes*, whose active and conciliating disposition had been a principal cause of the pacification. He was the first to conceive the idea of it, and brought it about by the good advice he gave to both parties. He spake with much warmth to us on the desirableness and necessity of it.

The representative now came in, and, addressing us with great civility, said, "Ladies, you are come, I see, to make your peace!" and approached to salute me; but I drew back with displeasure, and he did not insist. I was still dressed as a peasant. He signed our amnesty, which was couched in the following terms:—"Liberty;—Equality;—Peace to the good;—War to the wicked;—Justice to all. The representatives have admitted to the amnesty *such a person*, who declares having concealed himself for personal safety."

We wished to leave Nantes soon, and remain unnoticed; but there was something soothing in again seeing our companions in misery, and to hear how they had escaped so many dangers. We felt also a melancholy interest in learning how those we had lost had perished.

Madame de Bonchamp, when at Ancenis, had procured a small boat, and attempted to cross the Loire, with her two children. The armed vessels fired upon her, and a cannon ball went through the boat; yet she reached the other side; and some peasants swam after her, and saved her. She then remained concealed on a farm, and was often obli-

ged to resort to a hollow tree for safety. In this forlorn situation, the small-pox attacked her and her children, and her son died. At the end of three months she was discovered, conveyed to Nantes, and condemned to death. She had resigned herself to her fate, when she read on a slip of paper, handed to her through the grate of her dungeon, these words, "Say you are with child." She made this declaration, and her execution was suspended. Her husband having been dead a long time, she was obliged to say the child belonged to a republican soldier. She remained shut up, and every day saw some unfortunate women go to execution, who had been deposited the evening before in her dungeon, after receiving their sentence. At the end of three months, it being evident she was not pregnant, she was ordered for execution, but obtained again two months and a half as a last respite, when the death of Robespierre saved her, and she was finally liberated by the active exertions of M. Haudaudine.

M. Haudaudine, a respectable merchant of Nantes, and a zealous republican, but sincere and virtuous, proved himself another Regulus. Having been taken prisoner by M. de Charrette, he obtained permission to return to the republicans, to endeavour to dissuade them from the practice of shooting their prisoners, and make them consent to a cartel of exchange. M. Haudaudine was very ill received at Nantes. They declaimed against the baseness of his proposal, and signified to him, that he was disengaged from the promises he had given to the *brigands*. But M. Haudaudine, at the risk of being the victim of both parties, returned to M. de Charrette, who I know not why, again imprison-

ed him. When M. de Charrette was driven back to Tiffauges, M. Haudaudine, thrown among the other prisoners, was spared, as well as they at St Florent. This generosity excited his gratitude; and as soon as he had the power of favouring the Vendéens, he employed himself with zeal in their cause. In order to save Madame de Bonchamp, he made a number of the prisoners of St Florent sign a declaration, that she had obtained from her dying husband the pardon of 5000 republicans.

Madame de Bonchamp apologized, with a very good grace, for having ascribed to herself a merit which belonged to the whole army; and said, that, had I been in prison, the certificate would have done for both. The truth was, she had appeased M. d'Argognes, and the enraged soldiers, who threatened the republican prisoners. Madame d'Autichamp, mother of M. Charles d'Autichamp, succeeded so well in disguising herself, that she entered into the service of an administrator of the district, and tended the cows; and, as she never divulged the secret to any one, she never was spared, and worked as hard as any common peasant. At the end of a year, she heard of an amnesty, but was afraid, for a long time, to ask any questions upon the subject. At last she determined to inquire at her master if it was true. "And what have you to do with that, good woman?" said he.—"It is because I have known some brigands;—how are they received?"—"With open arms."—"But, sir, persons of consequence, are they also well received?"—"Still better."—Madame d'Autichamp then told him who she was. The master, being a good-natured man, was so struck with the discovery, and with regret

at the hardships she had undergone, that he reproached her, with tears in his eyes, for her want of confidence.

Many Vendéen ladies had similar adventures. They became, during their proscription, real peasants; working in the fields, keeping sheep, and fulfilling all the other duties of their new condition. A young lady of Voyerie cut off her finger with her sickle while reaping. This mode of concealment was very hard and painful; but, affording most security, was perhaps the least uncomfortable.

There were also many persons saved in the town of Nantes, notwithstanding the terror that prevailed there. Some of the people were extremely good; and I could mention instances of noble disinterested courage and humanity towards the proscribed. The wealthy merchants showed themselves, in general, very humane; and, although in favour of the revolution in its origin, they detested the crimes it led to, and were therefore as much persecuted as the royalists. The ferocious set, eager for massacres and *noyades*,* was composed of the lower classes of citizens (*petits bourgeois*) and tradesmen, of whom many were not Nantais.

Some ladies, as by a miracle, were forgotten in the prisons. Among these were found Madame de Beauvolliers, Madame and Mademoiselle de la Marsonnière, Mademoiselle de Mondyon, &c.; but the most part of those who were taken, either died on the scaffold, or were drowned. They all displayed an heroic courage, never disavowing their real sentiments, &c.

* Drownings.

The peasants, women as well as men, did not show less courage, devotion, and enthusiasm; repeating, in their last moments, "Vive le Roi!" "We are going to Paradise!"

Madame de Jourdain was taken to the Loire, to be drowned with her three daughters. A soldier wished to save the youngest, who was very beautiful; but she, determined to share her mother's fate, threw herself into the water. The unfortunate girl falling upon dead bodies did not sink; she cried out, "O push me in—I have not water enough!" and perished!

Mademoiselle de Cuissard, aged sixteen, was still more beautiful, and excited the same interest in an officer, who passed three hours at her feet, supplicating her to allow him to save her; but she had an old relation whom this man would not run the risk to save, and Mademoiselle Cuissard threw herself into the Loire after her.

A horrible death was that of Madame de la Roche St André. As she was with child, they spared her till she should be delivered, and then allowed her to nurse her child; but it died, and the next day she was executed.

It has been said, that all women with child were spared; but, on the contrary, it was rare, and only when they were brought before the tribunals. Mothers were then allowed time to nurse their infants, as being a *republican obligation!* Such was the humanity of those times.

My poor Agatha had encountered very great dangers. She had left me at Nort, to avail herself of the amnesty which was then held out. She came to Nantes, and was taken before General Lamberty, the most ferocious of Carrier's friends.

Agatha's figure pleased him; and he said, "Are you afraid, brigande?" "No, General," answered she. "Well, then, when you are, remember Lamberty!" She was then conducted to the entrepôt, the too famous prison, where the victims destined to be drowned were collected, and carried by hundreds each night on board the boats, tied two and two, and pushed at the point of the bayonets into the water! They seized so indiscriminately all they found in the entrepôt, that, upon one occasion, they drowned all the officers of a British ship who were prisoners of war. Another time, Carrier, desirous of giving an example of the strictness of republican morals, got together three hundred women of the town, and had them all drowned! Fifteen thousand persons perished in this manner in the course of one month! Misery and disease assisted, indeed, in the destruction; making great havoc among the prisoners, who lay crowded on straw, destitute of every comfort; and receiving no assistance, they were scarcely known; and the dead bodies were often left more than a day before they were carried away.

Agatha, expecting immediate death, sent to Lamberty. He conducted her into a small boat with a *swing trap-door*, in which they had drowned the priests, and which Carrier had given to him. He was alone with her, and wished to take advantage of the opportunity. She resisted, and Lamberty threatened to drown her, on which she attempted to throw herself overboard; but he stopped her, and said, "You are a noble girl, I will save you." He left her eight days alone in this vessel, in which she nightly heard the drownings that took place.

He afterwards concealed her in the house of S——, another faithful instrument of Carrier's.

S—— had a brother a Vendéen; and, in the beginning of the war, having been made a prisoner by the insurgents, this brother saved his life, and set him at liberty. After the defeat of Savenay, the Vendéen came to Nantes, and solicited an asylum from his brother, who, instead of granting it, denounced him, and he was executed. Remorse, however, soon took possession of S——, and, imagining himself incessantly pursued by his brother's ghost, he plunged into new crimes to drown the recollection of the first.

His wife, a very beautiful and excellent woman, conceived great horror at this crime, and often expressed this sentiment. It was, therefore, with the view of conciliating her, that S—— thought of saving a Vendéen, and taking her to their house.

Some time after, there was a division among the republicans of Nantes. Some of his enemies accused Lamberty of having saved some women from the *noyades*, and drowned others who should not have suffered. A young man named Robin, who was very much devoted to Lamberty, came and seized Agatha in the house of Madame S——, dragged her into a boat, and was going to stab her, that no living proof of the crime with which they reproached his patron might remain. Agatha threw herself at his feet, and succeeded in exciting his pity; he carried her to one of his friends named Lavaux, who was an honest man, and had already sheltered Madame de l'Epinay. The next day, however, the asylum of Agatha was discovered, and she was arrested.

Although the enemies of Lamberty continued

to pursue, and at last accomplished his destruction, there was some interest excited for Agatha; and S—— and Lavaux were praised for their humanity. After the death of Robespierre, Agatha still remained some months in prison.

During the latter part of that time, she often received intelligence of us from peasants who came to Nantes to see their imprisoned relations. Cottet, who had also miraculously escaped, and who had early got himself released by passing for a Swiss republican, determined to find us out, and formed a plan for taking us as his relations into Switzerland. I have already related how his zeal occasioned us great uneasiness, and endangered his own life.

CHAPTER XXIII.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE FATE OF THE DIFFERENT VENDEEN OFFICERS WHO CONTINUED THE WAR.—OUR RETURN TO BOURDEAUX.

It was at Nantes I learned the fate of the fugitives, and how those who continued the war terminated their lives; but I was not informed, till afterwards, of many particulars which attended the close of their glorious career.

My father, the Chevaliers de Beauvolliers, MM. Desessarts, de Mondyon, de Tinguy, and some others, withdrew, after the defeat of Savenay, into the forest of Gavre. They found concealed there

a M. Canelle, a Nantes merchant, who had been outlawed. He offered to assist them in finding an asylum; but my father and his companions preferred attempting some new enterprise. They collected about two hundred Vendéens, and surprised Ancenis; but as they were endeavouring to ford the Loire, the republicans, who had taken away the boats, perceiving the small number of the assailants, returned and surrounded them. Prodigies of valour were exhibited by the Vendéens in this combat; and they succeeded in cutting their way through; but, wounded and exhausted, they were overtaken on the heath by dragoons, who carried them to Angers, where they were shot. Mademoiselle Desessarts, who was with them, shared the same fate.*

The name of Donnissan became extinct with my father. M. de Lescure was also the last of his family, whose original name had been Salgues, but acquired by marriage the name of Lescure, which they had borne for three hundred years: and the name of Salgues was now no longer inserted even in the family deeds. There are many families who bear the name of Salgues, and others that of Lescure; but none of them are connected with that of my husband.

The Prince of Talmont was taken with M. Bougon, in the environs of Laval. They cruelly protracted his death, leading him from town to town, and from prison to prison; but he displayed a cou-

* They did not drown at Angers as at Nantes, but shot their wretched victims; who were led to execution, fastened together in couples like hounds.

rage and dignity worthy his descent, and remained unmoved amid the insults of the republicans. He said to his judges, "Do your duty—I have performed mine." They concluded, by executing him in the court of his château of Laval.

MM. Dupérat, Forestier, Renou, Duchesnier, Jarry, Cacquerey, the Chevalier de Chantreau, and some others, penetrated into Brittany, where they were at first in concealment; but as soon as the Chouans of M. de Puyssaye showed themselves, they joined them. M. de Cacquerey being surprised alone, was killed; and at the end of a few months, the rest of the Vendéens, tired and disgusted with an obscure war, carried on more by intrigues than battles, M. de Puyssaye always repressing rather than supporting their ardour, returned to the Chouans on the borders of the Loire, commanded by M. de Sepeaux, and from thence to La Vendée. The Chevalier de Beaurepaire, MM. de Bejarry, the three MM. Soyer, MM. Cadi, Grelier, MM. Vannier, Tonnelay, Tranquille, de la Salmonière, Lejeay, &c. repassed by degrees to the left bank, and continued to add to the reputation they had already acquired. Many others were less fortunate, and either perished on the scaffold or died in their retreat, without my being able to learn the particulars of their death. MM. de la Marsonnière, Durivault, de Perault, d'Isigny, de Marsanges, de Villeneuve, Lamothe, Desnoues, the last of the Beauvolliers, &c. thus ended their lives.

The old M. d'Auzon, who was taken at Blain with his servant, was anxious to save the life of this fine young man, who had remained to attend upon him. But on seeing the interest he felt, they

shot the young man first, to render this good old man's death more bitter!

M. de Sanglier expired between his two granddaughters, from fatigue and disease. One of these grand-daughters has been since found. M. de Langrenière was guillotined at Nantes. M. de Sepeaux concealed himself, and became afterwards the chief of a Chouan corps in the environs of Candé and Ancenis.

M. de Lacroix was denounced by four deserters, who demanded a reward for their services. Carrier, after guillotining M. de Lacroix, sent them to Angers with a pretended letter of recommendation, but which contained an order to have them shot. The young M. de Beaucorps was taken; but his face was so disfigured by sabre wounds, that he could not be recognised; and he answered their questions in a manner that led them to believe his wounds had disordered his reason; and uncertain whether he was a Blue or a Vendéen, he was retained in prison, from which the amnesty released him. Two of our excellent officers, MM. Odaly, and Brunet his cousin, were sleeping together when the prisoners were sent for to be led to execution. They called out M. Odaly and his cousin; but the latter, by appearing quite unconcerned, was supposed not to be the man, and escaped.

M. de Solilhac, after escaping from Mans, where he had been made a prisoner, found means of procuring a pass, and the dress of a soldier; crossed all France, even Paris; and arrived at the outposts of the army of the north, and from thence passed into the English camp. The Duke of York welcomed cordially a Vendéen who could give him

the particulars of a war, as yet little understood by foreigners, and immediately sent him on to London. The Ministers received him graciously, and made many inquiries with a view to the expeditions they were perpetually planning for the west coast of France, but which they never executed. At the conclusion of some months, M. de Solilhac, wearied with repeated disappointments, crossed over in an open boat; and landing in Brittany, hired himself as a miller's servant; then inciting several parishes to rise, he became the chief of a division of Chouans.

M. Allard had crossed the Loire, and, after wandering many days, was taken. He was condemned to be shot, and was led to the place of execution; but a sudden alarm and call to arms having suspended it, his look of youth, and candour, interested in his favour; and he was saved, but obliged to enlist in a battalion, and sent to Noirmoutiers, whence after some time he escaped, and returned by swimming across the arm of the sea which separates it from the Continent. He presented himself to M. de Charrette, who received him coldly; but soon becoming sensible of his merit, gave him the command of a division. M. Allard was in some measure the occasion of the second war. Some soldiers, who were under his command, having violated the armistice, the republicans imprisoned him. M. de Charrette having claimed him, and being refused, took arms again.

The pretended Bishop of Agra was discovered and taken in the environs of Angers. He was asked if he was the Bishop of Agra. "Yes," answered he, "I am he who was called so;" and would give no other reply. He behaved on the scaffold with

great courage. His sisters also suffered on his account.

MM. d'Elbée, d'Hautrive, de Boisy, Madame d'Elbée, and many other ladies, were escorted to the army of M. de Charrette, by the brother of Cathélineau, and an officer named M. Biret, at the head of fifteen hundred Angevins, and crossed all the republican posts. M. de Charrette sent all the women and the wounded to Noirmoutiers, which he had just surprised and taken. Cathélineau brought back the Angevins to their own district.

Three months after, the republicans took Noirmoutiers, where they found M. d'Elbée still at death's door from his wounds. His wife might have got away, but she would not leave him. When the Blues entered his chamber, they said, "So this is d'Elbée!" "Yes," replied he, "you see your greatest enemy; and had I strength to fight, you should not have taken Noirmoutiers; or, at least, you should have purchased it dearly." They kept him five days, and loaded him with insults. He submitted to an examination, during which he displayed great moderation and candour. At length, exhausted by suffering, he said, "Gentlemen, it is time to conclude;—let me die." As he was unable to stand, they placed this brave and virtuous general in an arm-chair, where he was shot. His wife, upon seeing him carried to execution, fainted away; a republican officer, showing some pity, supported her; but he was threatened to be shot if he did not leave her. She was put to death the next day. MM. de Boisy and d'Hautrive were also shot. They filled a street with Vendéen fugitives, and suspected inhabitants of the island, and massacred the whole. Among these were the two

young Maignans de l'Ecorce, who, notwithstanding their extreme youth, used to go to every battle with their governor M. Biré, who was also shot.

I have already given an account how MM. de la Rochejaquelein, de Baugé, Stofflet, de Langerie, and about twenty soldiers, had been separated from the army before Ancenis. A republican patrol had pursued them from the river side, and the soldiers were dispersed, but the four chiefs escaped together through the fields. The whole day they wandered about the country without finding a single inhabitant.

All the houses were burnt, and the peasants who remained were concealed in the woods. The corps of insurgents, of which they had heard, and which had appeared before Ancenis, was commanded by one of Cathélineau's brothers; but it was not always assembled, and only for limited operations. After twenty-four hours of fatigue, Henri and his three companions found an inhabited farm, and had just thrown themselves upon some straw to sleep, when the farmer came to tell them that "the Blues were coming." They had, however, such absolute need of rest and sleep, that they were unwilling to move even at the hazard of life, and awaited their fate. It was a small party of Blues, who were as much fatigued as the Vendéens, and slept near them on the other side of the same heap of straw. Before day M. de Baugé awakened his companions, and they set off again, wandering through a desolated country, where they travelled whole leagues without seeing a human being; and would have died with hunger, had they not afterwards fortunately met some Blues, whom they attacked, and took their bread.

They penetrated as far as Châtillon, and even entered it during the night. The sentinel called out to them, "Qui vive?" but they did not reply, and escaped. From thence they went to Mademoiselle de la Rochejaquelein's house at St Aubin, where she was concealed, and passed three days with her. Henri was overwhelmed with grief and despair at being separated from his army in so fatal a manner; but, after making inquiries respecting the state of the country, he resolved to return to his old Poitevin followers, and rally what remained of them. At this moment, he learned that M. de Charrette was advancing towards Maulevrier; and, in consequence, he and his companions set out, and travelled during the night, to join the army. He was coldly received by the general; who, just sitting down to breakfast, did not even offer him a place at the table. They conversed on the campaign of the Outre-Loire; about which M. de Charrette asked some vague questions. They then separated, and M. de la Rochejaquelein went to a peasant's house, to get something to eat. Some hours after, the drum beat for the army to march, and Henri returned to M. de Charrette, who said to him, "You will follow me."—"Sir," replied Henri, "I am not accustomed to follow, but to be followed!" and turned his back upon the general; and they parted thus.

All the peasants from the environs of Châtillon and Chollet, who had come to join the army of Charrette, the moment they saw Henri, pressed around him, without his having addressed a word to them.

M. de la Rochejaquelein commenced active operations against the Blues. He first assembled his

troops in the parish of Névy, whence they marched all night, and carried a republican post, situated at eight leagues distance; and, during four nights in succession, he made similar expeditions, and always at such remote points, as prevented any surmise where his attacks were to be made. The republicans, imagining he must have a number of troops, sent a considerable force to oppose him. Henri then established himself in the forest of Vésins, and from thence he made excursions, surprising posts, and capturing convoys and small detachments of the enemy. One day an adjutant-general was brought to him, who was extremely surprised to see M. de la Rochejaquelein, the general of the Vendéen army, inhabiting a hut made of branches, dressed as a peasant, a large woollen cap upon his head, and his arm in a sling; for want of rest had retarded his wound from healing. M. de la Rochejaquelein had him examined, and then shot. They had found in his pocket an order to promise amnesty to the peasants, and then to massacre them as they came in. Henri took measures to let this order be known throughout the country.

His small forces increased by little and little, and, by degrees, became masters of the whole country; but they were still not sufficiently strong to attack the garrisons of Mortagne and Châtillon.

On Ash-Wednesday, the 4th of March, 1794, they had attacked Trémentine sur Nouaillé, and gained some slight advantage. Henri saw two republican grenadiers, whom his soldiers would have killed; "No," said he, "I wish to speak to them." He then went forward, calling out, "Surrender; you shall have your lives!" One of the grena-

diers turned, and fired upon him. The ball struck his forehead, and he fell dead! The grenadier endeavoured to snatch his carabine, to fire at M. de Baugé and some others, who were hastening on, but was cut down. They were penetrated with grief; but, as an enemy's column approached, they hastily dug a grave, where Henri and his murderer were buried together. Stofflet, so far from sharing in the universal sorrow, said, in his vulgar language, "This la Rochejaquelein of yours was no great wonder." He then seized on Henri's horse, and took the command, to which he was entitled.

Thus perished, at twenty-one, Henri de la Rochejaquelein! To this day the peasants speak with love and pride of his great courage, his modesty, his affability; that easy, careless, good-humour of a soldier (*ce caractère de guerrier et de bon enfant*) which distinguished him. There is not a Vendéen whose countenance does not brighten when he tells of his having served under M. Henri! He was born in the Château de la Durbellière, the 30th of August, 1772.

Stofflet, after taking the command, carried on a separate war against the republicans, and had some successes, and even took the important post of Chollet. It was about this time that M. de Marigny, crossing the Loire, entered the district of Bressuire, with which he was well acquainted. He there collected together the remains of M. de Lescure's division, and in a short time formed a large army that adored him; for, notwithstanding his severity towards the Blues, nobody was more good-natured. There were at this time three separate armies. The army on the coast, commanded by

M. de Charrette; that of Anjou, by Stofflet; and the army of Poitou, by M. de Marigny.

M. de Marigny opened with a brilliant and successful engagement. On Good Friday, the 18th of April, he attacked the Blues in the avenues of our Château of Clisson, beat them completely, and killed 1200 men. This defeat intimidated them extremely; and, evacuating Bressuire, they withdrew into their camp of Chiché. He then placed the centre of his army at Cérizais, and from thence made excursions, which were almost all fortunate; and none of the three generals preserved their districts so clear from the Blues. M. de Marigny even pushed as far as Mortagnes; but though he beat the republicans, he could not preserve that post. Many of our former officers left the other armies to join his; and among those were M. de Baugé and the Chevalier de Beaurepaire, from Anjou. MM. de Charrette and Stofflet became very soon jealous of the power and influence acquired by M. de Marigny; and this feeling produced a species of correspondence and concert between them. They proposed to M. de Marigny a conference, for the purpose of concerting a common plan of operations; and at this meeting it was agreed, that the three armies should unite, and attack the republican posts which flanked the whole left bank of the Loire.

On the day appointed, M. de Marigny arrived after a long march, at the rendezvous. When the distribution of provisions took place, he demanded the share for his soldiers, but did not receive a sufficient quantity. His troops, already discontented with having been dragged so far from their cantonments, mutinied, and marched back. M. de Marigny finding the council would not attend to

his just complaints, followed his soldiers, and, in extreme rage, returned to Cérizais. His resentment was the more justly excited, as these gentlemen had but a few days before proposed to deprive him of his command, and reduce him to be only general of the artillery, as he had formerly been. This proposal was the more extraordinary, as there was scarcely any cannon left in La Vendée.

The expedition of Charrette and Stofflet did not take place. They went after M. de Marigny as far as Cérizais; but he was no longer there, and his army was disbanded. They convoked a council of war, and condemned him to death for contumacy. Charrette was reporter, and moved for the sentence of death.

The army of Marigny felt the utmost resentment at this iniquitous sentence, and swore they would defend their general against all his enemies. He heard of the condemnation with composure. Loyal to excess himself, he could not believe his fellow soldiers could in reality wish to destroy him. Such an intention appeared to him as absurd as it was cruel; but he could not bear the idea of any blood shed on his account.

He was ill in health, and withdrew to a small country house near Cérizais, and passed there some time; and, with the more security, from Stofflet having often declared that he was devoted to him, he thought they only wished to deprive him of his command. He therefore took no precautions, although Stofflet approached Cérizais, and did not even accept the invitation of M. de Charrette to come into his cantonment; a proposal which seem-

ed to imply that this general did not wish his death.

Meantime, the curate of St Laud, who had acquired the most unbounded influence over Stofflet, arrived from the army of Charrette. The day of his arrival, Stofflet gave orders to some Germans to go and shoot M. de Marigny. The wretches obeyed. M. de Marigny had only his domestics with him; he could not believe so infamous an act was intended. But when he saw, however, that his death was determined, he requested a confessor, which was rudely denied. On this, passing into his garden, he said to the soldiers, "It is for me to command you! To your ranks, chasseurs!" He then called, "Present—Fire!" and fell dead.

Of all the Vendéens none certainly met a death more deplorable and revolting. Stofflet came to Cérizais, and met M. de Marigny's staff-officers with a gloomy and embarrassed air. After a moment, he said, "Gentlemen, M. de Marigny was condemned to death, and he has been executed." A profound silence prevailed, and he left the room. The curate of St Laud came in at this moment, feeling, or feigning surprise, but no indignation; he pretended ignorance, and that he was just arrived from beyond the Loire. It appeared certain, however, that he had had a conference on the preceding evening with Stofflet, who, it was generally believed, would never have acted thus of his own accord. A moment before giving orders to the chasseurs, he had promised to the elder M. Soyer, one of his best and most loyal officers, that he would not injure M. de Marigny.

This death occasioned a kind of mutiny. The domestics of M. de Marigny, who had been put in

prison, were released. The soldiers disbanded, and refused to march under the orders of the man who had assassinated their general. Few of the Vendéen chiefs were more regretted and left a higher character than M. de Marigny. He was indefatigable in his exertions to preserve the country from the devastations of the Blues; and the Poitevin peasants were full of gratitude and attachment. Their hatred of Stofflet is unabated; and they never speak of the death of their general without the keenest resentment.

M. de Baugé, who was warmly attached to Marigny, publicly declared, that he would continue to serve, because it was necessary; but it should be as a common soldier. Stofflet ordered him to prison; but M. de Beaurepaire declared himself as guilty as M. de Baugé. His firmness intimidated Stofflet. The next day there was an engagement, during which M. de Baugé's guards left him at liberty. He took his arms and joined in the battle, returning to his prison when it was over; but the soldiers said they would not guard him any longer. He continued in the army as a common soldier, never approaching Stofflet, nor holding any intercourse with him. As soon as Charrette accepted the amnesty, he availed himself of it; and, while the intriguers who surrounded Stofflet retarded the pacification, for the purpose of procuring better terms for themselves, he, on the contrary, endeavoured to pacify and draw from the woods the peasants of M. de Marigny, who had remained there since his death, determined to acknowledge no other chief, nor follow any other army, only attacking such republican patrols as disturbed them.

After the death of M. de Marigny, there were but two armies; although a third might be said to exist under M. de Royrand, but it was very inconsiderable. In this manner the insurrection came to be entirely in the hands of MM. de Charrette and Stofflet, who never, in reality, agreed. They were both devoured with jealousy and ambition. The war had no longer that character of union among the chiefs, and universal self-devotion, which distinguished the early days of La Vendée. The peasants were disheartened; and severity was become necessary to keep them to their duty, instead of those higher motives by which they were at first impelled. No great battles were fought as formerly; it became a war of ruffians, carried on by treachery. The ferocity of the republicans had hardened the most humane; and reprisals were made for the massacring of prisoners, the *noyades* of Nantes, broken promises, villages burnt, with all their inhabitants, and all the horrors, which posterity will hardly credit! Some republican columns, calling themselves the *Infernals*, had scoured the country in every direction, massacring men, women, and children. It happened more than once that a republican general, after sending word to the mayor that he would spare the inhabitants of a *commune*, if they would return to their dwellings, had them surrounded, and slaughtered to the last man. No faith whatever was kept with these unfortunate peasants.

During this horrible war, it must be admitted that M. de Charrette acquired immortal glory. The boldness of his measures, his fertility in resources, and constancy, never subdued in the most desperate situations, mark him a great man. Wounded,

pursued from place to place, with scarcely twelve companions left, this general was still such an object of fear to the republicans, as to induce them to offer him a million of livres, and a free passage to England; which he refused, choosing to persevere in the unequal struggle, till he was taken and put to death.

Stofflet had some of the same qualities, and perhaps more military talents; but he was harsh and brutal, yet easily led; and the curate of St Laud obtained a complete ascendency over him; and to the use he made of it, he owed the reputation he has left in La Vendée, for selfishness, vanity, and ambition. That prudence, judgment, and talent, he had shown to attain his end, forsook him entirely afterwards.

Many officers distinguished themselves in the three armies by noble traits of heroism, now little known, because the war had no important consequences.

The brother of Cathélineau, who had collected some troops after the passage of the Loire, showed himself worthy of his name, and died gloriously. Two other brothers, four brothers-in-law, and sixteen cousins, died in battle. One son and four daughters of the general are all that remain of his illustrious name; and they are in great poverty.

The health of my mother, and the wish to learn the fate of our relations and friends, to the end of the war, detained us two days in Nantes. The few persons that came to see me, and who had not known me before, were extremely surprised. The Vendéen ladies, and I in particular, had such a warlike reputation, that they fancied Madame de Lescure must be a great masculine woman, wield-

ing her sabre, and fearing nothing. I was obliged to disclaim all the high feats attributed to me, and frankly tell how the least danger frightened me.

We now wished to set out for Médoc, and, as a passport was necessary, M. Maccurtin gave me an order of the representatives, which enjoined the municipality to give passports to Victoire Salgues, and to Marie Citran, as I had thought it better for the journey to conceal the names by which we were known; and, still dressed as a peasant, I carried it to the municipality. Many persons waited for their papers, and were very roughly treated.

A religieuse was immediately before me, and the municipality, who, like the representatives, showed now great attention to those whom they had slaughtered a little while ago, behaved extremely well to her, which encouraged me, and I advanced. At the name of *amnestiée*,* they all rose, made me a number of bows, called me Madame, offering their services with great civility, and all this to a poor Vendéen. Whilst they treated the republicans so bluntly, and *thou'd and thee'd them*, (*tutoyer*,) they spoke to me in the third person.

We set out upon our journey, with our maids, in a carriage we had purchased; taking with us Mademoiselle de Concise, whose mother had perished at Nantes, and who did not know where to go. Our whole luggage was contained in two little baskets, which astonished the postilions extremely.

I stopped to see the people to whom I had confided the care of my eldest daughter, near Ancenis, having always indulged some hope of her being still alive, and thought it might be for the purpose

* Person under the amnesty.

of better concealment, that they had said she was dead. I was so persuaded of it, that I imprudently offered them 3000 francs* down, and an annuity of 1200, if they would restore my daughter; for they might have been tempted by this bribe to impose another child upon me. But they repeated with tears that she was dead, and that with her they had lost their fortune. They had even the integrity to offer to me the money I had given them for concealing her.

At Ancenis, as the Chouans often appeared in force upon the road of Angers, the district would not allow us to proceed further without an escort, although there were republican posts at every half league. We durst not tell that we were not afraid of the *brigands*. We passed two days waiting the arrival of an aide-de-camp of General Canclaux, who was to pass that way, and they wished to make one escort serve for both. When he came, on learning who we were, he had the politeness to make our carriage move first; thinking too, perhaps, that we should defend him better against the Chouans than his escort of seventeen hussars. Thus were we defended by the Blues against the brigands! This strange situation distressed me; but, after Angers, there was no further occasion for an escort; and we continued our journey to Bordeaux, without any other impediment than those a very severe season offered, being stopped eleven days by the ice, at the passage of St André de Cubzac. We observed a great deal of poverty everywhere in the country, and even absolute famine.

On the 8th of February, we arrived at Bordeaux,

* Tenpence sterling to a franc.

and found my uncle de Courcy had been long dangerously ill; but this circumstance had saved him from persecution; and Citran was not sold. Our friends, rejoiced as they were at seeing us, felt a sort of terror; they could scarcely credit the amnesty, the particulars of which were unknown to them; we were objects of curiosity and interest, and they looked upon us as very extraordinary persons. We went to the department to have our amnesty registered, still in our peasant dress. They received us coldly, but civilly. The commissary of the department was disposed to lecture us a little, and said, they relied on our repentance. This phrase shocked me; I coloured, and looked at him in a manner that alarmed my friends; but it had no bad consequences, and we returned quietly to Citran.

The amnesty did not terminate my misfortunes; but those I have experienced since have less interest, as they only relate to myself. I lost my little daughter, at the moment I again hoped to see her. She died on being weaned, at seventeen months old. By the laws, as well as by M. de Lescure's will, I succeeded to the whole of his property.

When the 18th Fructidor arrived, my name was found upon the list of emigrants, and that I, as well as other persons whose names were not erased, must leave France on pain of death,—although it was very clear that I had never emigrated. I went to Spain with M. de Courcy, whose name was also upon the list; but my mother remained. I passed eight months upon the frontiers, and became sincerely attached to the inhabitants of that country, who possess an upright and noble character, from

which I anticipated the conduct they have since pursued.

Meantime, my mother succeeded in obtaining my recall. She had represented that my exile was a violation of the amnesty, and of the peace concluded with the Vendéens, which declared that all those who had taken a part in the war were not emigrants.

This just remonstrance was attended to, owing to some interest she employed; and she prevailed upon them to extend to my department of the Gironde, the secret instructions the ministers had given to the departments of the west, to enable the *amnestiés* to remain in France. They did not, however, know of this letter at Bordeaux: and thus I was the only Vendéen who was obliged to leave the kingdom. When I returned, therefore, I was not even put under superintendence, (*surveillance,*) *being one who ought not to have been sent away.* The department of Bordeaux erased me from the list of emigrants, upon my certificates of residence. This decision required to be confirmed at Paris, which appeared a thing of course; but I had new difficulties to encounter. Some unknown enemies, or zealous republicans, stole from the offices one half of the documents; and my demand was refused. I immediately received a new order to quit France in eight days, under pain of being shot;—and all my property was put up for sale. I returned to the good Spaniards, who had formerly given me an asylum, and passed six months among them, where I began these Memoirs. I returned to France in the month of May, when my name was erased. The face of everything had changed since the 18th Brumaire.

I found, on my return, contrary to every expectation, all the property I had left. Much had been sold during the war in La Vendée; but I had been deprived of nothing while I was exiled.

In Poitou, the memory of M. de Lescure had protected me even with persons whom I did not know, or who differed from me in opinions: From regard and gratitude to him, they had taken the warmest interest in my welfare, and exerted themselves to preserve the property ordered for sale. In Gascony I owed everything to MM. Duchâtel, Deynaut, Magnan, and Descressonière.

My mother pressed me to marry; but I wished to devote the remainder of my life to the memory of those I had lost. Feeling it even a kind of duty, after so many misfortunes, I often thought of consecrating my wealth and attention to relieve the wounded Vendéens, who had fought under my eyes, and whose misery I had shared. I was also unwilling to lose a name so dear to me, and so glorious! I could not bear renouncing all remembrance of La Vendée, by thus entering on a new existence! I therefore refused my mother's solicitations, till I saw in Poitou M. Louis de la Rochejaquelein, brother of Henri. It seemed to me, that, by marrying him, I attached myself still more to La Vendée, and that, by uniting two such names, I did not offend against him whom I had loved so much!

I married M. Louis de la Rochejaquelein the 1st of March, 1802; and from that time have lived with my mother in the country.

SUPPLEMENT.

When I wrote my Memoirs for you, my dear Children, we lived in the country, shunning with care every kind of publicity, avoiding Paris, cherishing our opinions, our sentiments, and, above all, the hope that God would one day restore to us our legitimate Sovereign.

M. de la Rochejaquelein occupied himself with agriculture and field-sports. This peaceable and obscure life was of no avail in soothing the irritation of the Government, which was far from being satisfied with our submission, and seemed to be provoked that it could not obtain our homage and services.

We suffered everything from a tyranny which would permit us neither tranquillity nor happiness. At one time a spy was placed among our domestics; at another, some of our relations were exiled from their homes, from an apprehension that their benevolence gave them too firm a hold in the affection of their neighbours; then my husband would be summoned to Paris to give an account of his conduct; or a hunting party would be represented as an attempt to rally the Vendéens. Sometimes we were blamed for going to Poitou, because it was

thought our influence there might be too dangerous; then reproached for not remaining there and employing that influence in favour of the conscription. People in office thought nothing more meritorious than annoying us in any way; promises and threats were in turn employed to engage our family to accept some office under Government. In 1805, M. de la Rochejaquelein was offered a place at Court, and solicited to make his own terms. Our independent attitude, and the consideration attached to pure and faithful principles, disturbed the Government. In short, we were unceasingly harassed.

It was nearly about this time that we became acquainted with M. de Barante, then under-prefect of Bressuire.

The conduct of the people of La Vendée, during the war, had filled him with admiration; he had the highest opinion of their simple and honourable characters. He openly avowed his esteem for the constancy of our sentiments; and a perfect confidence was soon established between us. He did everything he could to render our situation as little irksome as possible. He boldly avowed that it was both mean and unjust to exact from us anything more than obedience to the existing laws. He knew M. de la Rochejaquelein had too much sense, and too much honour, to risk the shedding of blood, by exciting useless tumults, and that he would never attempt anything, but with a reasonable hope of saving his country.

In 1809, the persecution became more open and direct; they wished to force M. de la Rochejaquelein to enter the army as adjutant-commandant, with the rank of colonel. He was known to have

made, as captain of grenadiers, five campaigns against the negroes in St Domingo. The letter of the minister was equally pressing and polite; and stating how much his brother had distinguished himself in arms, it was presumed he also must desire to follow the same career. He refused; the state of his health, five children which we already had, were alleged in excuse, but which probably would not have been admitted, if not enforced by the zeal and kind offices of our relation M. de Monbadon.

My brother-in-law, Auguste de la Rochejaquelein, was also invited to enter the service at the same time with M. de Talmont, M. de Castries, &c. He went to Paris and refused. As soon as they perceived he had objections to make, instead of listening to him, they arrested him. Still he did not yield, but demanded to be informed of what he was accused, and why he was thrown into prison. At last, after more than two months, he obliged the minister to explain himself without disguise, who then plainly told him that he should continue a prisoner until he accepted a lieutenancy. He was placed in a regiment of carabiniers, in which he remained three years. At the battle of Moskwa, he was covered with wounds, taken prisoner, and conducted to Saratow. He was well treated there; and the King having had the extreme goodness to write in his behalf, much was done to mitigate his sufferings.

Towards the end of 1811, the state of my health, and the desire of seeing my relations, induced me to visit Paris, where I had not been since 1792, along with my mother. M. de la Rochejaquelein came and joined me there. The expedition against

Russia was then determined on. Those who, like us, had continued invariably attached to the House of Bourbon, never beheld Buonaparte undertake a new war, without indulging a secret hope, that some of those chances which he braved with so much folly might lead to his destruction. At this time, above all, the gigantic and extravagant nature of this expedition, the distance of the armies, the nature of the country where they were about to be engaged, and the evident inutility of an enterprise thus conceived, gave strength to the hope that the tide of his prosperity was about to turn. We conversed on this subject with those who partook of our sentiments. M. de la Rochejaquelein sought for and saw those men who were the most distinguished by their name and their constancy, and, among others, MM. de Polignac, in spite of the strictness of their imprisonment. We returned into Poitou, and from thence into Médoc, where we passed the winter of 1813. The disasters in Russia, the destruction of the army, the measures it was necessary to take to repair these losses, the multiplied levies, the sacrifices of every kind which the Government imposed, the hateful establishment of the regiments of guards of honour;—everything, in short, seemed calculated to hurry on the catastrophe, and lead to a revolution for which it became necessary to be prepared.

It was in the month of March in the same year, that M. Latour arrived at Bordeaux, bearing the orders of the King. Before speaking of his mission, it is necessary to give an account of what had passed in that city since 1795. The royalist party had always been very numerous there; the young men full of zeal and enterprise, the mass of the peo-

ple very well disposed. All the emigrants that were imprisoned had been set free either by address or force; a multitude of conscripts had there found an asylum, the Spanish prisoners had met the most favourable reception, and a thousand other circumstances had sufficiently proved what the sentiments of the Bordelais were. Besides, the chief royalists had secretly formed themselves into armed bands; the greater part composed of artisans who have never received any pay. The discretion of so many people is still more remarkable than their fidelity. I will now explain the origin of this organization.

The epoch which followed the second war of La Vendée, that is to say, 1796, is that in which the royalists had the greatest hopes, and concerted the most numerous enterprises. The Directory had then little power; at no period of the Revolution was greater liberty enjoyed, or less restraint on public opinion. The King had communication throughout almost all the provinces; everywhere an organization of the royalist party, scarcely kept secret. Commissaries named by the King, who was then at Vérone, were actively employed in his service. M. Dupont Constant was his commissary at Bordeaux; he presided over a numerous council. His principal agents were M. Archbold, Dupouy, Cosse, Estebenet, &c.

Some months before, (after the second war of La Vendée,) M. Forestier and M. Céris came to pass a few days at Bordeaux. They were going to Barèges for their health. We were not acquainted with the last; for, having emigrated, he only arrived in La Vendée in 1794. M. de Céris returned, on the part of M. Forestier, to inform us, that they

had resolved to go into Spain and England. He asked letters of recommendation from my mother. She gave him several, very pressing, for the Duke d'Havré, her intimate friend, and for my uncle, the Duke de Lorges. She had no idea that these gentlemen were engaged in any enterprise; and perhaps they themselves had then no very distinct views on the subject. The flattering reception they had met with, the conversations they had held, the state of France, which seemed every day to offer more favourable chances, all served to redouble their zeal.

In the month of May, 1797, they returned, bringing my mother a letter from Monsieur, in which he charged her to collect the King's party at Bordeaux. She received also instructions from the Duke d'Havré, the Prince de la Paix, &c. She immediately saw that the extreme zeal of these gentlemen had led them to exaggerate everything, and represent the state of affairs under far too favourable an aspect. However, she considered it as a sacred duty to second the views of the Princes, who had honoured her by their confidence. She confided every thing to M. Dudon, ancient procureur-general, and to his son. She conferred with them on what was to be done. This worthy magistrate, in spite of his great age, was full of energy. He immediately discovered that M. Dupont Constant was a commissary of the King; and they formed a secret council, composed only of MM. Dupont, Dudon, Deynaut, and the Abbé Jagault, ancient secretary of the superior council of La Vendée. They were of opinion that it was essential, first of all, to enlighten the Princes as to the real

state of France, of which they had received a very inaccurate and much too flattering an account.

M. Jagault set out for Edinburgh. He drew up and presented to Monsieur, a memorial, in which the real state of things was exposed.

The day of the 18th Fructidor soon came and evinced the truth of these sincere observations. The hopes of the royalists were at once destroyed, and their projects overthrown, by that event.

It was not till about a year after, when the power of the Directory began to be shaken, when the Austrians and Russians had obtained great advantages in Italy, and everything seemed to announce an approaching change, that the royalists were roused to make more vigorous exertions. My mother, long before, had gained over to the King's party M. Papin, a merchant of Bordeaux. He had set out, some years before, at the head of the volunteers, and, having greatly distinguished himself in the Spanish war, had obtained the rank of general of brigade on the field of battle. He had joined the army full of zeal for the revolution; but, having learned, on his return, the excesses that had been committed during his absence, he would no longer associate with men whose crimes he detested, and complained to M. Denaut that they wished to place him on the list of a Jacobin Club.

My mother got M. Papin introduced to her. She heightened the horror he had already begun to feel for the Revolution, and succeeded in overcoming his reluctance to join the opposite party, by convincing him how disgraceful it was to remain faithful to so bad a cause. She presented him to MM. Dudon and Dupont with the confidence which he deserved. These gentlemen having appointed him, in the name

of the King, general of the whole department, he immediately set about forming the royal guard, which has existed ever since.*

At no period did success appear so near; the law of hostages had kindled the third war of La Vendée, and renewed and extended that of the Chouans. At Bordeaux they had come to extremities; the Jacobins, assisted by a regiment, openly attacked the young men of the town.

M. Eugène de Saluces was severely wounded, and thrown into prison with about forty others, who got out successively; but he remained during four months confined, along with a brave man, a cabinetmaker, named Louis Hagry, a person of extraordinary zeal. This passed in the summer of 1799: we were then in Spain, whither my mother had got permission to accompany me in my second exile. We met at Oyarsun M. Richer-Sérisy. This journalist, after a long interview with my mother, set out for Madrid with M. Alexandre de Lur Saluces. His object was to endeavour to persuade the Court of Spain to take up arms for the House of Bourbon, and second the victorious efforts of the Austrians and Russians.

The return of General Buonaparte the 18th Brumaire, and, above all, the battle of Marengo, arrested once more the projects of the royalists.

The MM. Dudon died, also the excellent M. Latour-Olanier. A great number of the royalists were arrested, and kept in prison eighteen months; among others, MM. Dupont, Dupouy, Dumas, &c. M.

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* M. Papin was chiefly assisted by MM. de Maillan, Sabès, Labarte, Gautier, Latour-Olanier, Roger, Aquart, Marmajour, Rollac, Dumas, Delpech, &c.

Papin made his escape, and found means to clear himself, through the influence of his friends the Marshals Moncey and Augereau. At the time of Pichegru's affair, he had returned to Bordeaux. New arrests took place there. He again escaped, and returned to General Moncey. They affected to believe him innocent, on account of his protection; but scarcely had he returned to Bordeaux, under a promise of not being molested, when they came to seize him. He concealed himself; and then finding that the informations against him were so positive, he quitted France. He was tried by a military commission, and condemned to death (*par contumace*). Since that time he has remained in America. MM. Forestier, de Céris, du Chenier, &c. were also condemned (*par contumace*). M. Goguet was executed in Bretagne, and the intrepid M. Dupérat imprisoned for life. These events put a stop to all communication with the King, and the party sunk into silence and inactivity.

My mother was seriously implicated in what had passed at Bordeaux, after the battle of Marengo. She narrowly escaped being put in prison and tried; but she was ably assisted; and her defence was the more easy, from the tranquil life she led in the country, never putting herself at all forward in boasting of the confidence of the Princes. After having shown M. Dudon Monsieur's letter, she burnt it in his presence, and never spoke of it again. Our friend M. Queyriaux, the most zealous of the party, was almost the only one through whom she held any communication with the royalists. She was often consulted; but seldom interfered; but to maintain confidence and unanimity. This conduct arose from her character, and not from any feeling of fear. She never con-

cealed her opinions; and it was, perhaps, owing to her frankness and simplicity in that respect that she escaped. One who spoke so openly, and led so quiet a life, could hardly be suspected of concealment and duplicity.

In 1806, the seizure of the Princes of Spain excited a lively indignation at Bordeaux. M. Rollac arranged a plan with the Spanish consul, M. Pedesclaux, M. Taffard, de St Germain, Roger, and some others, to carry off Ferdinand VII. and conduct him to the English station. They sent M. Dias, a Spanish teacher at Bordeaux, to give him notice of it; and he succeeded in introducing himself, and speaking to him for a few moments in his chamber; but it seems the Prince did not choose to trust a stranger; and these gentlemen waiting in vain for his order, the project failed. M. Rollac, a little after, contrived a plot to deliver Pampelune to the Spaniards. He was on the point of succeeding, when he was discovered, and obliged to fly. His friend M. Taffard got him on board a vessel for England; and carrying a few lines from my mother to my uncle de Lorgues, was by that means made known to the King, and informed him of the devotedness of the Bourdelais, and, above all, of the courage and zeal of M. Taffard, to whom he owed his life. The communications with Bordeaux were thus re-established; but nothing took place for several years. The retreat from Moscow in 1813 once more awakened hopes. M. Latour arrived at Bordeaux, bringing M. Taffard a letter from his friend, inviting him to rally the royalist party. M. Latour charged him to do so on the part of the King: he was far from expecting this honour. A gentleman of small fortune, with a nu-

merous family, without ambition, M. Taffard only thought, in serving M. Rollac, he fulfilled the duties of friendship; and, attached as he was to the House of Bourbon, he had no idea of forming a party. But the orders of the King appeared to him sacred.

M. Latour was also charged by his Majesty to see M. de la Rochejaquelein, and tell him that he reckoned on him for La Vendée. My husband went immediately to Bordeaux, and had the same evening a conference of four hours with MM. Latour and Taffard.

M Taffard, assisted by M. Queyriaux, Marmajour, &c. once more took up the old plan of the royal guard, and M. de la Rochejaquelein set out for Poitou. He traversed Anjou and Touraine, along with M. de la Ville de Baugé, who had always remained most warmly attached to him. They went about everywhere sounding the state of opinions, and visiting their friends, and the old Vendéens. He was exceedingly sorry to find that General Dufresse was no longer in the department; he had commanded them a long time, and had rendered infinite service to the Vendéens. He was the confidant of all my husband's hopes, and had given him his promise to serve the King whenever an opportunity occurred. At Tours he found all the young men of La Vendée who had been forced to enter the guard of honour. They were extremely dissatisfied. He did not conceal from them his hopes and desires, but recommended to them to wait with patience for the decisive moment.

The carrying off Ferdinand VII. from Valencey was then talked of. M. Thomas de Poix, a gentleman of Berri, and a great friend of M. de la

Rochejaquelein, was to have conducted that enterprise; but he died at the moment he was about to act. My husband continued his journey, passed a fortnight at Nantes with his friend M. Barante; he also saw MM. de Sesmaisons, M. de Suzannet, his cousin-german, and the Prince de Laval, who had left Paris with the same views as himself.

The young guards of honour at Tours did not conduct themselves with all the discretion that had been recommended to them; they did many rash things; several of them were arrested; and among others M. de Charrette, a brave young man, and worthy of the name he bore.

M. de la Rochejaquelein returned into Médoc. I lay in on the 30th of October; and on the 5th of November M. Lynch, mayor of Bordeaux, an old and respectable friend of my mother, sent an express to my husband, to inform him that they were just setting out to arrest him. M. Lynch himself was going on a deputation to Paris; but he did not go till he was sure of the safety of M. de la Rochejaquelein. My husband left me in ignorance of all this, and went to Bordeaux with M. Queyriaux. While at dinner at Castelnau he saw the gendarmes arrive who had been sent to seize him. M. Bertrand commanded them. He knew perfectly well what was intended; but as he was not the bearer of the order, and only charged to lend assistance to a commissary of police, he allowed M. de la Rochejaquelein to pass, although he knew him perfectly. The commissary of police, who was in a carriage, was retarded by the bad roads. At break of day, however, the Château was surrounded by the troops; the servants, who knew nothing of the departure of their master, told them he was

in the house. They and the peasants, who had arrived in crowds to attend mass, were in the deepest affliction; and, if he had been taken, would have fallen upon the gendarmes to deliver him. Many of the neighbours, whom we scarcely knew, had got on horseback with the same design. The search was long, brutal, and ridiculously minute.*

While M. de la Rochejaquelein was concealed at Bordeaux, MM. de Tauzia and de Mondenard, both of the municipality, watched over his safety; and, in the meantime, MM. de Monbadon and de Barante made every possible effort to get the order for his arrest revoked. The minister, after some difficulties, replied, that M. de la Rochejaquelein had only to come to Paris, and give him the necessary explanation. I had not an entire confidence in these assurances; yet they were repeated so strongly, and the cause appearing so utterly hopeless, from the negotiation of the Allies with Buonaparte, and the daily expectation of peace, that I confess I sometimes was inclined to accept the proposal of going to the minister. I was certain, besides, that there did not exist a single line of writing that could implicate my husband; and I dreaded a long separation, and fresh persecutions. For his part, on the contrary, he never hesitated for a moment. He foresaw, that, even if the minister should keep his word, and not put him in prison, he would be harassed, either by an exile,

* The commissary of police was furious in missing his prey. We learned afterwards, that he had sent orders to take M. de la Rochejaquelein dead or alive, and to bring him post night and day, and at whatever hour it might be, to the minister.

or an imperative offer of some post in the army. He determined, at all events, to preserve his liberty; his thoughts were constantly turned towards the project of raising La Vendée, when the moment should arrive. His eyes were always fixed on that quarter; his name, his perfect knowledge of the country, and his influence over the inhabitants, naturally led him to this; and besides, the request of the King determined him irrevocably. During his concealment at Bordeaux, he became the mean of uniting several secret associations, which, till that time, had acted separately, though with the same views. The persecutions directed against him had marked him out as a leader of the party; and all those devoted to the cause were eager to be connected with him. He informed M. Taffard of this, who, as commissary of the King, could not so generally make himself known.*

In the month of December, one of the captains of the royal guard, M. Gigoulon, a fencing-master, was seized, carried to Paris, and put in irons; but he continued resolute during fifteen interrogatories, and nothing was discovered.

Towards the beginning of January, 1814, M. de la Rochejaquelein came and passed three days with me at Citran. He then traversed the Lower Médoc with his friend M. Luetkens, a person remarkable for his calm and cool bravery, and his devotedness to the King. They informed all those in whom they could confide, of what had been concerted at

* MM. de Gombault, Ligier, a glazier, Chabaud, a teacher, Badin, the Abbé Rousseau, Dupouy, &c. had distinct associates. MM. Ligier and Chabaud, zealous and enterprising men, had already organized eight companies; they had been engaged in it from 1809.

Bordeaux, and opened a communication to them with the city: But it was in vain that their ardour increased every day; the position of the French army between Bordeaux and the English put a stop to every attempt.

M. de la Rochejaquelein returned to live at Citran. Our children and all our servants saw him. Persons whom we knew nothing of before, were constantly coming to converse with him; and yet, such was their discretion, that his retreat was never disturbed. The police had not abandoned their search; but it was more anxiously continued in Poitou and at Nantes, on account of the friendship of M. de Barante.

From the month of December, some tumults had taken place in La Vendée. Several conscripts refused to obey, and fought with the gendarmes. But the Government, fearing a civil war, and knowing their want of power to repress it, consented to show some indulgence; exacted much fewer sacrifices, and raised fewer levies, from that part of the country, than from any other; and did not there impose those enormous requisitions which oppressed the rest of France.* This prudent system, together with the presence of about two thousand gendarmes, prevented the war from breaking out during the winter; although there were bands of refractory conscripts, who defended themselves with their arms in their hands; and the people could hardly be restrained from rising *en masse*. But the chiefs were unwilling to do anything rash, and waited till the insurrection could

* The insurrection of La Vendée extended to part of four departments; to each of these, different indulgences were granted.

be quite general, before they declared themselves. The continued prospect of peace paralyzed the most daring.

In the meantime, M. de la Rochejaquelein constantly recurred to the design of throwing himself into the midst of the brave Vendéens; but it was precipitating himself into certain danger. He was more particularly sought after there than at Bordeaux. He could not venture to follow the great roads, when he was so well known; and the cross-roads that year were impassable, on account of the extraordinary floods. At last, with great difficulty, we got him to consent to delay his decision until M. Jagault should have made a tour into the west, to ascertain the position of things, and prepare for him the means of arriving in La Vendée. He set out on the 26th of January. He was first to traverse La Saintonge, and inform my brother-in-law, M. de Beaucorps, of his intentions to confer with M. de la Ville de Baugé, and endeavour to communicate with the ancient chiefs. He was then to go to Paris, and concert matters on a great and general plan with M. de Duras my cousin, de Lorges, &c.; and to finish by Nantes, where he was to confide all to M. de Barante. These were precisely the provinces, and the same arrangement for the insurrection, that had been pointed out fifteen years before by Monsieur, when he gave his instructions to M. Jagault.

On his arrival at Thouars, on the 5th February, he wrote, that it would be impossible, at that time, for M. de la Rochejaquelein to penetrate into La Vendée, and undertake anything of importance; that he was continuing his route to Paris; and that he hoped, on his return, to find things in a more

favourable state. These delays but ill accorded with the impatience of my husband.

For some time a report had been current, that the Duc d'Angoulême had joined the English army; and it was soon confirmed. M. de la Rochejaquelein instantly determined to go to him, to inform him of what was passing, and take his orders. (M. Armand d'Armailhac had arrived three days before to offer him a vessel, which was about to sail for St Sebastian.) He left Citran, to concert matters with MM. Taffard and de Gombauld.

On reaching Bordeaux, M. de la Rochejaquelein begged M. de Mondenard to tell M. Lynch,* who was just come from Paris, that he was anxious to testify his gratitude, and open his heart to him. He immediately came to see him. M. de la Rochejaquelein told him, he believed he could not better recompense the great services he had rendered him, than by informing him of all the secrets of the royalists, of what had been arranged at Bordeaux during his absence, and of his departure for St Jean de Luz. M. Lynch, transported with joy, without hesitation said, "Assure the Duc d'Angoulême of my entire devotion; tell him I shall be the first to cry 'Vive le Roi,' and deliver him the keys of the city."

* M. Lynch, when at Paris, foreseeing the fall of Buonaparte, found means to get into La Maison de Santé, where MM. de Polignac were confined; and, after a long conference, gave them his word of honour, that, if Bordeaux should ever declare for the King, he should be the first to mount the white cockade. These gentlemen recommended him to explain himself to MM. de la Rochejaquelein and de Gombauld, with whom they had long maintained an intercourse.

The vessel prepared by M. d'Armailhac for the passage of M. de la Rochejaquelein was commanded by Captain Moreau, who had a license for Spain; but it was very difficult to get on board; for, besides the search that must take place before leaving the river, the customhouse-officers were to remain until she was four leagues at sea, and return in a boat.

I had just received a very encouraging letter from the senator M. Boissy d'Anglas, extraordinary commissary of the twelfth division. M. de la Rochejaquelein took it with him to prove to the Duke that it was not to save himself that he came to him. He quitted us on the evening of the 15th February. I had only strength to pray God to receive this last sacrifice we could make to the King.

He embarked in the night of the 17th along with M. François Queyriaux, who insisted on sharing all his dangers, in the chaloupe of Taudin, a coasting pilot of Royan. They lay in the *tille*, without being able to change their posture, for forty-two hours; they managed to escape the Regulus, a guard vessel, which searched the smallest boat that went out. A dreadful gale arose, and threatened the utmost danger to their bark; the vessel of Captain Moreau lost her anchor, and they thought at one time he would be obliged to return to Bordeaux, but he found another at Royan. During this time Taudin's chaloupe was at anchor in the midst of all the boats of the port; and the two fugitives were every moment in danger of being discovered. Captain Moreau put to sea; some pretext was necessary to enable them to follow him. Taudin thought of crying out to his son,

with a loud voice, so that all those on the quay might hear, asking him if he had delivered Moreau the bread as he had ordered him. The son answers, No; the father in a rage scolds him for his neglect; his anger prevented all mistrust. He goes for the bread to his house at Royan, and at the same moment confides his secret to the pilot, who was going to bring back the *douaniers*. They then agreed that they would board the ship at the same time, he on one side, and Taudin on the other; and while the *douaniers* came down into the boat, M. de la Rochejaquelein and M. Queyriaux slipped on board the ship on the other side. Their passage was rapid; in twenty-two hours they were at the entrance of the harbour of Passage. A violent gale had come on; several vessels perished a few hours after within sight of land; however, Moreau succeeded in getting in. M. de la Rochejaquelein found Lord Dalhousie at Renteria, and they entrusted him with the object of their voyage. He received them with the greatest attention, made them the most obliging offers, and even pressed them to accept of money. M. de la Rochejaquelein only begged to be conducted to the Duc d'Angoulême, who was at St Jean de Luz. Lord Dalhousie had no horses, but he ordered two soldiers to conduct them, who marched with them the whole night. They went immediately to the Prince; he had only arrived about a fortnight before, under the name of the Count de Pradelles, accompanied by Count Etienne de Damas. Lord Wellington had already paid him his respects (*hommages.*) The mayor of St Jean de Luz, and the inhabitants of some small neighbouring parishes, were the only Frenchmen that had yet made known

to him their sentiments and wishes. As soon as he learnt the plans at Bordeaux, the situation of La Vendée, and the general state of opinions, his heart once more opened to hope, and he declared that nothing should again induce him to quit the soil of that France where he still found so many faithful subjects, and that he would rather perish among them than ever quit them more. He informed these gentlemen that Monsieur was in Switzerland, and the Duc de Berri at the island of Jersey, endeavouring, like himself, to penetrate into France.

The Duc de Guiche was ordered to conduct the travellers to the head-quarters of Lord Wellington, then at Garitz. That illustrious general received them very well. He had, from the first, shown himself very favourably inclined to the cause of the House of Bourbon. But when England and the Allies consented, or seemed at least still willing to consent, to treat with Buonaparte, Lord Wellington could no longer lend his assistance to any decided step in favour of the Princes. Besides, he had fallen into the common error of foreigners, and did not believe the people of France so favourably inclined to their cause as they really were. He had before him the French army, commanded by an able general, and this was the main object to which his views must of course be directed. Such were the objections which M. de la Rochejaquelein had to overcome; and, although urged with all possible respect for the Princes, and even with regret, they were not the less strong nor reasonable. M. de la Rochejaquelein first required that Bordeaux should be occupied, promising that the city would declare for the King. Then, that a powerful division might be effected in favour of Bor-

deaux, he requested one or two vessels, with only a few hundred men, to land in the night on the coast of Poitou, to escort him a few leagues into the country, and leave him there, and immediately retire and re-embark, which would attract the attention of the troops, and enable him to pursue his route. Lord Wellington told him positively, that he could dispose of no troops for an expedition which his government had not authorised. M. de la Rochejaquelein was then obliged, for the present, to renounce his project of penetrating into La Vendée; the coast being everywhere guarded with the most scrupulous exactness by the douaniers.

Lord Wellington determined to march forward. M. de la Rochejaquelein had the honour of following him the next, as far as the passage of Gave d'Oleron. He then returned to the Duke. He arrived at the same time with MM. Okely and de Beausset, deputies from Thoulouse, who came to offer him the services of that city;—he heard at the same moment of the battle of Orthez. He immediately set out for head-quarters. M. de la Rochejaquelein followed, and M. Queyriaux went on to Bordeaux, to acquaint the council* with the success of their journey, and to carry the Prince's proclamation. He made his way through the midst of conscripts, and the people whom the battle of Orthez had put to flight.

The Duke sent the Count de Damas to sound the disposition of the city of Pau; he ran a thou-

* The royal Council was composed of MM. Taffard, Lynch, de Gombauld, de Budos, Alexandre de Lur Saluces, de Pommiers, Queyriaux-aîné, and Luetkens.

sand risks in his journey, and obtained no satisfaction.

M. Bontemps du Barri had set out in the morning, sent by M. Taffard to inform Lord Wellington that the city was without defence, and that they ardently wished for the presence of the Duc d'Angoulême.—This information decided Lord Wellington; he ordered Marshal Beresford with three divisions to advance upon Bordeaux. M. Bontemps instantly returned to give an account of his mission. He encountered many dangers between St Sever and Bordeaux; and only extricated himself by his extreme courage and presence of mind.

The English army marched the next morning; and M. de la Rochejaquelein, who was with the advanced guard, went to receive the last orders of his Royal Highness, who told him, that Lord Wellington, whom he had just quitted, was still persuaded that Bordeaux would not dare to declare itself. M. de la Rochejaquelein then assured him, that Bordeaux would undoubtedly make the movement, and that he would answer for it with his head; and only asked permission to precede the English thirty-six hours. "You are then very sure of it?" "As sure as I can be of any human event."

The Prince then replied with warmth, "Go on, then; I confide in you!"

M. de la Rochejaquelein continued with the light troops till they reached Langon; he then went to the house of M. Alex. de Saluces, at Preignac, from thence M. de Valens acted as his guide to the city. Through detachments of the French troops and gendarmes, he arrived at Bordeaux at ten o'clock in the evening of the 10th of March. He learned that the council had just sent to beg Marshal Beresford

to delay his movement, that they might have more time to prepare the minds of the people, and to concert measures for uniting the royalists of the neighbourhood with those of the city. M. de la Rochejaquelein warmly opposed this delay, and urged the danger of giving time for reflection to the weak and timid, assuring them, that the sudden bent of the royalists would be instantly followed by a spontaneous movement throughout the city. They adopted his opinion, and MM. Luetkens, François Queyriaux, Valens, d'Estienne, and de Canolle, were successively sent to meet the Prince and the English, and entreat them to hasten their march.

During this time all the superior authorities quitted the city.

At last on the 12th, at eight in the morning, all was prepared for the reception of the Duc d'Angoulême; they assembled at the Hotel de Ville. The English hussars had already begun to enter the city. Some inconvenience was apprehended from their thus appearing, before the inhabitants were fully acquainted with what was about to follow. M. de la Rochejaquelein mounted hastily on horseback, with M. de Pontac, and went to meet Marshal Beresford, to beg he would call back the hussars, that the royalists' movement might be made before the arrival of the English. The Marshal agreed to it, and he remained with him. M. de Puysegur stayed at the Hotel de Ville, to proclaim the King there; at the same moment it was done at the outside of the gates. The royal guards were ordered out on the road with their arms concealed. The chiefs openly followed the cavalcade of the municipality. M. Lynch was in a carriage; he quitted it when out of the city, and said to the Mar-

shal, that if he entered the city as a conqueror, he should allow him to take the keys, having no means to defend them; but that if he came in the name of the King of France, and his ally the King of England, he should deliver them to him with joy. The Marshal answered, "That his orders were to occupy and protect the city, and that he might act as he thought proper." M. Lynch immediately cried, "*Vive le Roi!*"* and mounted the white cockade. The whole royal guard did the same. At the same moment the white flag appeared floating from the steeple of St Michael, where it had been deposited the evening before. The news was quickly spread among the royalists, and those who, from curiosity, had followed M. Lynch, that the Duc d'Angoulême would arrive in the course of the day. Then the cries of *Vive le Roi!* became universal; every one put white paper in his hat, and ran through the street, announcing the unexpected intelligence. When, about an hour after, the Duc de Guiche announced the Duc d'Angoulême, joy and surprise animated every heart; all danger was forgotten. The whole city flocked round MM. Lynch, Taffard, &c.;—almost every one fell on their knees, and the common people cried out, "He is of our own blood!" They were eager to touch his clothes, or his horse; he was carried along by the crowd to the Cathedral, where the Archbishop was waiting

* It ought not to be forgotten, that the evening before, the people of the little town of Bazas cried out *Vive le Roi*, without knowing whether Bordeaux would do the same,—and that as soon as the Prince appeared, and indeed in spite of him, for his goodness made him fear the royalists might be compromised by partial movement.

for him. He was for some time separated from his suite, and nearly suffocated by the pressure. I had not the satisfaction of enjoying that spectacle; I had remained in the country. It happened to be the very day (the 12th of March) on which the war of La Vendée had broke out, twenty-one years before; and I was so deeply moved by the recollections of that period, that I was quite overcome, and continued in a kind of stupor for above thirty hours.

M. de la Rochejaquelein asked permission of the Duke to raise a corps of cavalry. It was impossible for the Prince to obtain funds for the pay of troops, the country had been so ruined and drained by repeated requisitions, and the public chests all carried off. This cavalry was then necessarily composed of volunteers, equipped at their own expense. MM. Roger, François de Gombauld, and de la Marthonie, also obtained leave to raise companies; but M. de la Rochejaquelein, always looking upon himself as destined to fight in La Vendée, would only accept the command provisionally.

One of the first objects of the English was to get possession of the mouth of the river, and establish communication with both banks, to secure themselves from the attack of a pretty numerous flotilla which had been hastily fitted out, and continually menaced Médoc and even Bordeaux. A courier was dispatched for St Jean de Luz, with orders to the English squadron; but it was thought these orders might arrive sooner by sending them from the little port of La Teste. Lord Dalhousie entrusted his dispatches to MM. Eugène de Saluces, Paillès, and Moreau. La Teste had been occupied on the 12th of March by a post of infantry, and three hundred chosen men of the national

guards. MM. de Maulèon and de Mallet de Roquefort, who commanded them last, made them take the white cockade. They found some resistance from the inhabitants and the troops of the line; they ran the greatest risks, and their firmness alone saved them. They brought with them to Bordeaux a great part of the national guards, and of the detachment of infantry; the rest had gone to join the French troops that were at Blaye. However, M. de Saluces and his companions found they could not embark at La Teste as they had expected. The mayor and some of the inhabitants opposed their departure, and they were obliged to return to Bordeaux. His Royal Highness then ordered M. de la Rochejaquelein to proceed to La Teste with two hundred and fifty Englishmen, a party of the national guards under M. de Mallet, and some volunteers. The inhabitants were at first much alarmed; but as they knew M. de la Rochejaquelein, who was charged by the Prince to treat them with kindness and indulgence, everything passed amicably. The three most mutinous were merely put in prison for a few days. My husband remained a week there, occupying himself in extending the authority of the King along the coast, dissipating the prejudices of the inhabitants, and collecting powder and battering cannon to send to Bordeaux.

A few days after, Lord Dalhousie set out to attack St André de Cubzac and Blaye. He proposed to M. de la Rochejaquelein to go with him, on account of his knowledge of the people and the country, and in the hope that he might be able to establish some communication with the interior, and especially with La Vendée. His company of

volunteers wished to follow him, but Lord Dalhousie would not permit them. They encountered the French troops at Etauliers; they were inferior in number, and were repulsed.

My husband took advantage of the passing of the river to send back M. de Ménard, a gentleman from the neighbourhood of Luçon, who had come through a thousand dangers, to take the orders of the Prince for La Vendée. He was arrested at Saintes, but saved by General Rivaux, who was a royalist at heart. He arrived in La Vendée, and instantly began to arrange the insurrection; but the news from Paris rendered his efforts unnecessary.

Some hours after the combat at Etauliers, M. Bascher arrived, whom my husband had seen among the guards of honour. He had deserted at Troies, and hid himself in the house of a relation near Nantes, where he had met M. de Suzannet, who sent him to M. de la Rochejaquelein. He came to announce that all was ready in the west, where the ardour of the peasants daily increased, and that the tocsin would be sounded the week after Easter. Our ancient army was anxious to have M. de la Rochejaquelein to command them. They wanted fifteen thousand muskets, and, above all, powder, of which they had absolutely none. No troops were wanted to land those articles, as the country would be up in arms before they arrived.

M. Bascher had run great risks in this mission; he had been pursued, and only escaped through the disorder of the French troops. My husband immediately sent him to the Prince.

Lord Dalhousie returned to Bordeaux, to prepare for the attack on the citadel of Blaye. Ad-

miral Penrose having forced the passage of the river, had already begun the bombardment from that side. M. Deluc, the mayor of the town, had, on the 13th March, sent to his Royal Highness to assure him of his attachment; and had made efforts, but in vain, to induce the garrison to surrender.

In the meantime, they were not without uneasiness at Bordeaux. A strong French division was advancing by Perigueux; the English were not numerous; and at that time they did not know that the Marquis of Buckingham, as soon as the insurrection at Bordeaux was known, had obtained permission to embark with 5000 English militia to defend that city. But a contrary wind prevented them from entering the Gironde; and although the ardour of the royalists daily augmented, there had not been time to form a sufficient number of French corps. The Prince became more and more beloved. He went every day to visit the military posts, accompanied only by two or three persons, always going slowly through the streets in the midst of a crowd, who, charmed with his goodness and confidence in them, never ceased shouting, "Vive le Roi! Vive le Duc d'Angoulême!" They were electrified by the idea that he exposed himself to so many dangers for his love to France. There was not one but would have given his life for him. Count Etienne de Damas set a noble example. He will be ever dear to the people of Bordeaux, for his affability and the indefatigable zeal with which he laboured night and day in the service of the Prince. Every one felt encouraged by the prospect of the insurrection in the west, which was on the point of breaking out. Lord Dalhousie, who showed equal skill and attachment to the Prince, con-

sented to everything which could facilitate that movement.

The 13th of April was the day fixed for the departure of M. de la Rochejaquelein; his company of volunteers were to follow him. He obtained the powder and arms that were wanted. A messenger was sent to Jersey to the Duc de Berri, who was impatient to throw himself into La Vendée.

We were in the midst of these agitations of hope and fear, when, on the 10th of April, (Easter,) at four o'clock, a courier arrived, bringing the intelligence that the King had been acknowledged at Paris, and that all was over. It is impossible to describe the general intoxication of joy; the whole city were in a state of enthusiasm. The Duc d'Angoulême bestowed the most flattering recompense on M. de la Rochejaquelein,* by confiding to him his dispatches for Monsieur at Paris, and requesting him to go and receive the orders of the King. He arrived at Calais a few minutes before his Majesty. When the Duc de Duras named him, the King said, "It is to him I owe the movement of my good city of Bordeaux." He held out his hand to M. de la Rochejaquelein, who threw himself at his feet.

* M. de la Rochejaquelein was killed in June (1815), a few days before the battle of Waterloo, at the head of the new Vendeen army raised to oppose Buonaparte.

THE END.

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